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# ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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# ANGLO-IRISH TRADE

## IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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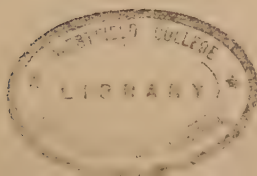
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## PREFACE

THE following work is in substance a thesis presented for the M.A. degree of London University in 1926, but it has since been slightly revised and enlarged for print. Although it was not possible always to reach very definite conclusions, it is hoped that the information collected, and the new material introduced from the Custom's Accounts, will be of value to those interested in Sixteenth Century Irish History. My thanks are due to my examiners—Dr Eileen Power and the Rev Claude Jenkins, of London University, and Prof. J. Rees, then of Birmingham University, for their help and advice.

A. K. LONGFIELD.

*Dublin, 1929.*

*"Irish policy is Irish history, and I have no faith in any statesman who attempts to remedy the evils of Ireland, who is either ignorant of the past, or who will not take lessons from it."*

—DISRAELI.

# ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

"The practises of Ireland be great, and not understood to all men that seem to have knowledge thereof."—Sir George Stanley to Cecil, 1565.

MUCH of the tragedy which underlies Irish history—whether political or economic—is summed up in those words, for of all the general causes which have influenced Anglo-Irish relations throughout the centuries, misunderstanding has been at once, perhaps, the most potent and the most unfortunate. The most potent because it engendered much unwise policy, made still more unwise by external circumstances, and the most unfortunate because it prevented that fusion of race and intellect without which there can be no ultimately successful conquest. Wherever two peoples of different civilisations come in contact there is bound to be an initial period of difficulty—a transitional stage while mutual agreement is being arrived at—but at the end of which there should emerge a race and culture enriched and strengthened by the introduction of new elements. In Ireland this phase was many times begun—with each successive wave of settlers—but was never completed and so there never took place that amalgamation of race and growth of a unified national consciousness which should have brought with it progress and prosperity. It is proposed to trace the influence of the set policy of

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separating the natives and settlers, and the other causes which especially affected Anglo-Irish relations in the sixteenth century ; but thoroughly to appreciate how important this element of national fusion would have been to a permanent and happy settlement in Ireland, it is only necessary to think of one or two outstanding examples of national contact. For instance, there has been the policy of extermination, such as that pursued by the Spaniards in the New World, yet who can doubt but that the world is the poorer for the lost civilisations of South America, and that no one nation possesses a Divine right to decree the annihilation of another ? The present day problems of East and West really centre in the apparent impossibility of fusion between the white and the coloured races. Similarly British difficulties in India rest on the basis that, unless national contact brings amalgamation, no country can be held for long which is merely garrisoned. And this applies not only to political, but also to commercial domination. China grows restless under an economic leadership which introduces too many elements alien to her national being. These instances are extreme, but they emphasise the contrast with the case most nearly analogous to that of Ireland—the Norman invasion of England—a conquest which was really effective because before two centuries had elapsed it had produced a new race and a new civilisation. It is true that it took long for the original tongue officially to oust that of the Court, but there is no doubt of the existence of a national consciousness as against French aggression, or of the advance in the system of government which followed the fusion of the best features of the Saxon administration with those of the Norman. Fortunately for England the transitional stage was comparatively brief and involved no long degradation of the native race. Here it contrasts most happily with Irish history ; and yet there was at first no *prima facie* reason why the same successful conclusion should not have been arrived at in Ireland. Indeed the distinction



of some of the old Anglo-Irish families, such as the Geraldines and Butlers, leads one to believe that under more favourable circumstances the "Middle Nation" might have produced a people uniting the best characteristics of Celt and Norman.

Acknowledging this failure to produce a unified national consciousness between the governing and governed races as the central cause of unhappiness, it is necessary to trace more closely the other factors and circumstances involved in Anglo-Irish relations up to, and including, the sixteenth century, at the same time bearing in mind their inevitable reaction on her economic position. One factor of prime importance even in early times was Ireland's geographical situation. Distance gave her immunity from the power of Rome and thus she lost what might have proved a valuable schooling within the Pax Romana and the opportunity of profiting by Rome's legislative and administrative genius. The last was indeed her great loss, for later her outlying position saved her when the barbarian invasions devastated even Imperial Rome and Saxon hordes overran England. Only the Danes succeeded in planting settlements along the coast, and even the powerful Canute did not include more under his rule. Finally even when the Dane's Latinised kindred, the Normans, had acquired not only a French but an English kingdom, the Irish Celt remained comparatively little perturbed in the heart of his primeval forests. But such a course of events had two-fold results. Immunity from the barbarian inroads enabled the Isle of Saints and Scholars to keep alight the lamp of learning and, through missionary zeal, to give that culture to England, France, Germany and Switzerland; but the same isolation engendered many serious disadvantages. Elsewhere the unpleasant schooling of conquest lowered, for a time, both England and the Continent to the same level of civilisation, but from the chaos of the Dark Ages there emerged new nations, where a fusion of races and genius produced

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possibilities of organisation and collective efficiency which the Celtic strain by itself was unable to create. The Irish tribes became separated by an entirely different plane of civilisation, and, though so far as some features went—especially literature—it was superior, as regards unified military effort or administration it was hopelessly inferior. Salvation might eventually have come from within, but the rise of a stable and central native power was fatally delayed by the Danish invasions and the Norman attack came before the Danish set-back had been made good.

It might have been better had the Normans invaded Ireland at the same time as England, for a century's development on the Norman side would have been saved and thus some of the difference between the degrees of their respective civilisations avoided. Not that this would have mattered so much if the early policy of the Crown had been happier, but Plantagenet kings, themselves the too-independent vassals of French monarchs, had no wish to be placed in a similar position with regard to their own nobles in Ireland. Unable or unwilling to give their whole attention, they merely interfered sufficiently to prevent the growth of a Hiberno-Norman kingdom under one of the great families, which might have resulted in the happy fusion of races such as occurred in England; yet they supplied no efficient alternative in the place of that natural development. Geographical situation was again partly to blame, for the Channel made more difficult a thorough and consistent attack, yet it was no longer wide enough to preserve effective isolation, or to allay the Crown's fear that Ireland, left to herself, might prove a dangerous ground for foreign or hostile occupation. In the meantime, however, the Crown's energies were diverted to Wales, Scotland and France, and the full consideration of Irish affairs was continually postponed—but that very procrastination was fatal, for it added to the original complications of the task, as the bitter experience of the

Tudors was to prove. Ireland has often been the prey of party exigencies or half-measures, and in none more than in the policy of separating the natives, English by blood and English by birth, and by playing these factions off against each other it was possible to keep the country weak and divided, yet partly under royal domination—and all at comparatively little expense. It has become a platitude to remark on the fact that if the time, money and energy which were wasted in the French wars had only been expended in Ireland, they might have resulted in the establishment of a stable government, and thereby what sorrow and suffering might not have been saved. Nevertheless, like most platitudes, it contains certain elements of truth, and no policy could have been more unhappy for Ireland than that whereby there was an administration in Dublin which could not keep the peace, but which prevented anyone else from eventually building up a centralised power.

This absence of a strong central authority is one of the most important differences between the Norman conquests in England and in Ireland. In England the royal power was present in person to check baronial ambition and oppression and the king himself formed the centre for the growth of national unity. To him the towns, the poor and the middle class could look for justice with a reasonable chance of obtaining it, if only because it was in the Crown's interest to increase its influence as against that of the nobles. There was, in fact, a central administration, which, despite set-backs under injudicious kings, (John or Henry III) still grew stronger and more efficient, yet was not divorced from the people (as in France) because through Parliament they had a share in the legislation. In Ireland, the only personal influence exercised by the Crown was during the few brief visits of Henry II, John, and Richard II, and nothing less than the continued presence of a scion of the reigning house could have given real stability to the Dublin executive. Even in the seventeenth

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century Sir John Davies noted the Irish affection for royalty, and in the early days of the Conquest there is no doubt that the counterpart of William the Conqueror, exercising an impartial rule over Norman and Celt alike, would have attracted (as in England) the depressed elements of the population to his side and eventually have brought about inter-racial unity. The Irish were willing enough in Plantagenet times to accept English law, indeed they pleaded that it might be extended to include them, for then at least they might have acquired some security of property. But their prayers were unavailing, for the royal lion was too far away to see the actual conditions, or to be able to interfere effectively, and a state of anarchy best suited the great lords who devoured the spoils, and who could so easily overawe the Deputy in Dublin. Thus it came about that to Ireland the Norman Conquest did not bring peace, but a sword, and it was through the retention of the different legal systems of the two countries that so much additional harm was done.

From the very beginning there was a certain amount of misunderstanding and misrepresentation about the old Irish legal system. The wily Dermot knew well enough that the offer of his daughter's hand could not possibly carry with it the disposal of his kingdom, since the ordering of the succession lay with the clan and not with him ; but he also knew that the promise of land would entice the aid he desired, and nothing else mattered to him. To Ireland that initial failure to distinguish between the Norman and Irish theories of land tenure was very serious, and set a precedent for many misinterpretations of avowed contracts—by Irish chiefs as well as by Norman barons. Whether such misunderstandings, especially on the part of the latter, were always quite genuine, may well be questioned. Nothing was more conducive to disorder than the existence of two codes, whereby it was possible for the Normans to enforce the interpretations of both in their favour, but



to ignore the penalties of either, should the case be against them. The fact that while an Irishman could be punished for offences against a Norman by the application of English law, but a Norman could not be brought to justice, either by English or Irish law, when he committed an offence against an Irishman, is only a case in point. The same principle applied to other than criminal affairs and, so far as land-grabbing went, was particularly convenient for the Norman aristocracy. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Normans never wished to master the Irish system, just as, in Tudor times, Irish chiefs were not anxious to examine the responsibility which the holding of land from the king involved according to English, although not to Irish, ideas. At the same time, while it is impossible to absolve the Normans from the indictment of perpetuating legal confusion for their own selfish ends, they cannot be blamed too severely if they did not appreciate all the intricacies of the Brehon law. As Bagwell has pointed out, there is always apt to be much misinterpretation when the systems of two planes of civilisation meet, and it is still difficult to avoid confusion by applying modern terms to ancient things. It is hard for the habits of thought formed under one set of circumstances to reason accurately into the heart of a system moulded by different influences. Despite good faith and more advanced education, mistakes were made in the nineteenth century about tenures in India, consequently it is not surprising that they were made in Ireland from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries. The real misfortune of the legal muddle is that, when in the sixteenth century the Tudor lawyers did attempt to evolve some order out of the chaos, their task was rendered well nigh hopeless by the prevalence of such disorder for so long a period. Used to a strong central government themselves, they looked with horror on the Brehon law and its composition for murder and other Celtic usages, quite forgetful of the fact that such

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customs were once part of their common Aryan Stock.<sup>1</sup> They could not see that the English common law was but a particular development of the original system and that the provisions of the latter—such as tanistry, designed to procure the inheritance not of the eldest, but of the fittest in the group of heirs—must have been justified in earlier circumstances. By the sixteenth century the feeling of the Irish too had changed. They were no longer so eager for the privileges of English law, for the example of its impartiality had been denied them ; neither did they recognise the common ancestry of the two systems that had diverged. Thus they clung to their own system as they clung to their religion, and partly because later opposition made it root itself the more firmly in the very depths of their being.

Without a strong central power and without a unified legal system to stay the rapacity of Norman baron and the restlessness of Irish chieftain, what could be Ireland's fate for three long centuries, but internecine strife ? If the original Conquest had been more thorough the chiefs might have been forced to band together properly to throw it off, but the feudal half-conquest was exceptionally fatal, for it merely discredited the slender remnant of the native polity without replacing it. Nay, worse, it added new sections to the unruly elements of the populace. Norman barons contended for their own selfish ends against each other, as well as against the Irish chiefs, and when it suited them did not scruple to make an alliance with the natives. Similarly Irish chiefs were willing enough to make temporary submissions in order to call in neighbouring Normans against the hereditary enemies of their clan. But the most serious aspect of all this chaos was its degrading influence on Irish civilisation. Centuries of this warfare worked irrevocable havoc to her culture and learning and well nigh completed the ruin which the Danish invasions had begun, and although it is true that when Ireland was at

<sup>1</sup> R. Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, Vol. I, pp. 10-12.

the height of her civilisation—from the sixth to ninth centuries—she was by no means at peace, it is also true that the native tribal warfare was conducted on lines which allowed as well for the co-existence of a great measure of literary culture. Pre-Norman Ireland undoubtedly continually suffered from internal strife, but the youth of a nation is seldom exempt from such conditions and the contemporary state of the rest of Europe was little better, with this essential difference, that, while elsewhere war was waged to the exclusion of learning, in Ireland they could, and did, exist side by side. The Brehon Law at least provided for the sustenance of the learned, and thus those who took up the primitive forms of the arts were assured of a livelihood. This innate respect for the church and learning probably suffered from the examples of Danish vandalism, but the continual struggle for existence against the Normans was a terrible blow to any full development of native culture. Tudor travellers in Ireland were amazed and horrified at the primitive customs of the natives, but what progress can a race make whose best energies are exhausted in a guerilla contest? The centuries which lay between Strongbow and Fynes Moryson witnessed a retrogression rather than an advancement of the people, for the real native civilisation was gradually crushed out in the struggle, and only the lower characteristics were left. The Irish letter to Pope John (22nd) about the action of the Normans was not without its truth. "After having violently expelled us from our spacious habitations and patrimonial inheritances, they have compelled us to repair, in the hope of saving our lives, to mountains and woods, to bogs and barren wastes and to the caves of the rocks, where, like the beasts, we have long been fain to dwell." Indeed by the sixteenth century much of the population with which the English came in contact was thus degraded below the twelfth century level, but that this was not natural is proved by the higher standard of civilisation evidenced where they had been left in

comparative peace. Margaret O'Connor Faly of Offaly in 1451 gave feasts which reflected the ancestral love of learning, and the Gaelic Renaissance produced its best results where there was a loosening of the English hold and where there was a successful Celtic resurgence during the fifteenth century.

These various factors in the pre-Tudor situation have thus been touched upon, because it is essential to understand them and to realise their baneful influence on the actual sixteenth century conditions. There is also another which must be mentined, and that is the policy which endeavoured to keep the English in Ireland perfectly English. Within a century from Strongbow's time the early Norman settlers had intermarried with the Irish, taken on many of their customs, and, in fact, begun that fusion which is the most promising outcome of conquest and colonisation. In many cases they had become "*Hibernis ipsis hiberniores*," resenting even more than the natives the "New English" who were sent over, either to fill the administrative posts or to be rewarded with estates in Ireland. To other quarrels were added the intrigues of the descendants of the earlier settlers, i.e. the English by blood, and the New English or English by birth. The Crown was afraid of the power of the hibernicised families who could draw on Irish, as well as Norman followers and tried to solve the difficulty by preventing such fusion. This was the object of the Statute of Kilkenny and the Acts connected with it. This policy of separation was really a tacit recognition of the Crown's inability to administer the country properly, and so it sought to save further trouble from the insubordinate Anglo-Irish by commanding the complete division of the races. A policy so much against the course of nature would have needed very strict supervision to ensure even a mild success; pursued during the preoccupation of English interests with the Wars of the Roses it could have but one effect. As Bagwell says, by Tudor times, "The English in trying



to become perfectly English, had shrunk almost to nothing, and the Irish by being held always at arm's length, had become more Irish and less civilised than ever."<sup>1</sup> It is true that the actual measures were so feebly administered that the policy was a practical failure, and that the great Anglo-Irish families, the Butlers, the Fitzgeralds, etc., continued to go their own way, nevertheless the Statutes did their quota of harm, if only in exemplifying the erroneous lines along which English statesmanship worked. It was the principle of such enactments which did the harm and which rendered so impossible the position of the "Middle Nation," who thus became "English to the Irish and Irish to the English"—a difficulty which has pursued all those who have desired the middle way in Irish politics right down to our own day. The tendency to favour those who knew least about the country because they were strangers—i.e. "The New English"—for administrative posts, not only made the government less in sympathy with the people it purported to govern, but opened up endless opportunities for quarrels, bitterness and intrigue between those who had a stake in the country and those who came—as so many officials under the Tudors did—to stay the time of their office and to depart with what profit they could. Moreover, it was the mentality which could only see a solution of the problem in separation which helped to give that vicious background of bitterness and extremes which has, unfortunately, been the most prominent feature in Irish affairs even in our own times.<sup>2</sup>

All definite policy was, however, practically nullified during part of the fifteenth century, for the Crown was too much involved in England to give either Ireland or her officials much thought or support. Helped by the

<sup>1</sup> R. Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, Vol. I, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that Spenser wanted the English and Irish to intermingle and thus "put away the dislikeful conceit both of the one and the other," but in his opinion this could only take place under a strong government.—*View of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 193.



absenteeism of those lords who joined in the Wars of the Roses, a wave of Celtic reconquest reduced the Pale to a few square miles round Dublin, and, although the land was distracted by the Desmond, Kildare and Ormond factions, still salvation might again have come from within, perhaps even under one of the Great Earls who were nearly as much Irish as they were English. But before that could be consummated Henry VII was firmly seated on the throne and it was soon plain that, though the Tudors might for a time tolerate the power of the Kildares, they certainly would not abandon Ireland as the appanage of an overgrown vassal. The real misfortune which Henry's accession heralded for Ireland was a further general recognition of her economic and political importance without the determination, or the means, to employ a consistent regime. The Tudors could not afford to concentrate their resources on her for any length of time. Any one policy—whether of plantation, mild colonisation or conciliation with and through the native chiefs—if adhered to for a sufficient length of time to result in some conclusion, would have been comparatively beneficial. But there were religious controversies, difficulties with France and Spain, to distract them, and, above all, that great impediment of all sixteenth century governments—lack of money. Many sudden changes of policy in Ireland were due to lack of funds, but that did not prevent such inconstancy from doing harm, and, indeed, only helped to convince the natives that broken promises, rather than good faith, were the customary weapons of the English authorities. Even the greatest personal concentration of the sovereign in the country, commanding an ample revenue, might have found it hard to settle the situation—but ever-changing measures, dictated to an unwilling Deputy with an unpaid army, increased rather than lessened the problems which had grown up earlier. Thus it is that the end of the century presents such a melancholy spectacle—a country conquered only in part, and that

mainly by devastation and plantation, but elsewhere no nearer a real solution, as the rebellion of 1641 was so terribly to show. The three centuries of half measures, neglect and long drawn out contest, had brought the inevitable evils in their train and the Ireland which the Tudors faced really presented far more difficulties than that which Henry II had so easily in name annexed ; but, unfortunately, few recognised this. The principal obstruction was that which has already been dealt with—the difference in the degrees of civilisation which had become so much accentuated by the sixteenth century, since the course of the Anglo-Norman struggle had not only retarded progress, but actually lowered the standard of Irish civilisation as compared with the developments in England and the Continent. Thus Tudor statesmen were further away than ever from understanding the Irish situation. They only saw a degraded race and it was beyond them to realise the effects of the circumstances of their history, or to appreciate what remained of Irish culture, which they took for granted, because it was so different from their own, to be essentially inferior. Henry VII and Henry VIII viewed matters with more politic eyes. The one was fairly successful in his rule through the Kildares, the other might have founded a happy precedent in his conciliation of the Irish chiefs, had his policy only been adhered to, and had there always been governors at hand fitted for the task. But Henry VIII also forged the most destructive weapon against his own policy when he broke with Rome.

Added to all the other causes of cleavage it was the religious controversy which made Anglo-Irish relations so bitter by the end of the sixteenth century. Wherever the Reformation gained permanent ground it was a spontaneous movement, often perhaps intermingled with new social and political theories, but at least in part the expression by the people themselves of a desire for a purified church. The hands of the Reformers were, if anything, strengthened by opposition and

persecution, but the will to break with Rome was the outcome of a certain degree of independent thought and was partly understood by the people. In Ireland there was a significant contrast. The Reformation was not a natural development, it was ordered by Act of Parliament and entirely introduced from without. Certainly it was not immediately objected to, because it was not immediately comprehended. The change in the king's regnal title at first conveyed little to the people and the dissolution of the monasteries was accepted with equanimity by those chiefs who were placated by grants of their lands. But gradually the real significance of the change became apparent, and, because many of the causes which had dictated the breach with Rome did not operate in Ireland, the people awoke to indignation, not against Rome, but against the attempts to thrust the new faith upon them. Again three centuries of retarded progress bore their bitter fruit. The native Irish had fallen too far behind the current developments on the Continent and in England, to understand the doctrinal reasons advanced for change, and were not filled with the same discontent against Curial procedure and mismanagement. This lack of a popular desire for reform might have been overcome by judicious handling. Enthusiastic preachers willing to brave loneliness, danger, poverty and eager to reach the people by preaching in their own language, might indeed have cultivated a zest for the Reformed religion. But the men who took up the work in Ireland were very different. Doubtless there were some zealous and pious men, but the majority drew their pay and neglected their work, they were idle and even licentious and, because they were instructed only to teach and preach in English, utterly without power to attract the mass of the Irish. Only in Dublin and some few towns did the work of Browne or his colleagues make headway, for in contrast to their half-hearted efforts were the austere lives of the friars. Small wonder that Ireland was a successful field for the

Counter-Reformation, and that Jesuit energy did not find it hard to keep the people in their old faith. Against the futility of the Reformed ministers they saw the eagerness of their own priesthood, an eagerness which opposition only increased, even when they were eventually reduced to travelling secretly round the country and conducting the services at the risk of their own lives.<sup>1</sup> In Ireland Anglicanism was thus unconnected with national aspirations, it was rather the badge of conquest, and, from opposition, the love of the Roman formula became more and more a part of the people. Nor did the Papal agents, while keeping religion alive, lessen the political entanglements. They reminded the Irish that, as Adrian's Bull had signified the Pope's gift of Ireland to Henry II, so Henry VIII's apostasy annulled the grant, and that their allegiance was no longer due to the (as they held) adulterous daughter, Queen Elizabeth—a view which other circumstances made it easy to foster.

Unfortunately the political effects of the religious controversy were not confined to Ireland. They complicated considerably the international position by adding to Ireland's value as a pawn in the game which Spain and France played against England. Moreover the fact that the Reformation failed both in France and Spain drew the Irish closer to them, and especially to the latter, than to England. It is from the sixteenth century that the dangerous intrigues between Ireland and outside

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Spenser on the subject. "Wherein it is great wonder to see the odds which are between the zeal of Popish priests and the Ministers of the Gospel. For they spare not to come out of Spain, from Rome and from Rheims, by long toil and dangerous travelling hither, where they know peril of death awaiteth them and no reward or riches are to be found, only to draw the people into the Church of Rome; whereas some of our idle ministers, having a way for credit and estimation thereby opened unto them, and having the livings of the country offered unto them without pains and without peril, will neither for the same, nor any love of God, nor zeal of religion, nor for all the good they may do by winning souls to God, be drawn forth from their warm nests to look out into God's harvest. . . ."—Spenser, *View of Ireland*, ed. Morley, p. 203.



powers began, and they were largely caused by this addition of religion to the other causes of cleavage between England and Ireland. The tragedy lies in the fact that such a cleavage might have been avoided by earlier understanding and sympathy. But, as Henry VIII's policy of conciliation gradually gave way to one of extermination and plantation, even if interrupted by periods of leniency, the native Irish (once so willing to come under English law) gave up the hopes of a satisfactory English solution of government and sought more and more for Continental aid. Doubtless they did not realise how insignificant and how inopportune their appeals often appeared abroad, or that they were promised aid less from altruistic sympathy with their ideals, than from a desire to annoy Elizabeth. Spain could not afford to deny outright the representatives sent to enlist assistance because the threat of an Irish rebellion could be used as a constant menace to England, but this half-help was particularly harmful, for it added another knot to the already tangled skein of Irish politics. The possibility of Spanish interference made the Elizabethan problem in Ireland still harder and definitely prevented many of the chiefs from coming to a settlement. Thus if religious differences helped to direct Irish affections towards Spain, it is equally true that the intrigues with Spain were responsible for many of the harsher measures of Elizabethan policy. Spain could not afford to assist Ireland effectively—not that a successful rebellion under adequate Spanish guidance would have been an unmixed blessing—but she was able to foment discontent, and so the vicious circle continued. Expeditions such as that to Kinsale in 1601, which broke the great O'Neill's heart by its futility, were fruitful only in embittering Anglo-Irish relations, and that they certainly accomplished. Combined political and religious motives thus led to the sending or smuggling of children to be educated as Roman Catholics abroad, and they often sought their advancement there, while, after the flight of the Earls,



each plantation or defeated rebellion was followed by the emigration of the flower of the native army into the ranks of the Continental forces. Thus each succeeding generation became more alien to England in thought and feeling, while France and Spain benefited from the influx of fighting power and intellect. How tragic the misunderstanding, how bitter the course of events which resulted in such a cleavage and which brought Irishmen to look to every country, rather than to England, for freedom, justice, education and advancement.

While condemning the outcome of Tudor and Stuart policy, however, we must not forget to make allowances for the international ideas of the time, nor for the difficulties with which the English administration was faced. The discovery of the New World was reacting on the Old in more ways than one, although that one, the increase in prices due to the influx of such immense new stores of bullion, was potential in adding to Elizabeth's monetary embarrassments in Ireland. But the New World gave to the nations of the Old the idea of colonies, not in the Greek sense, but in the Spanish, which was a very rigid interpretation of the worst in the Roman system. Thus colonies were to be administered entirely for the benefit of the home country, and so at the end of the sixteenth century there comes this atmosphere of colonial proprietorship into the Elizabethan statesmanship in Ireland. If England lacked as yet possessions in America, she could at least use Ireland as a substitute. This aspect dominates Irish politics in the seventeenth century, and especially in economic matters, but the beginnings are to be seen in the abandonment of conciliation and the substitution of war carried to the point of extermination, as in quelling the Munster rising. For the members of the administration who had to carry out all the changes of Tudor policy it is easy to find sympathy. If they were conscientious and anxious to deal fairly, they were hampered by changing orders and continually annoyed by political enemies who could so

easily spy on them, misconstrue their procedure and then report unfavourably either to the Crown or to its favourites.<sup>1</sup> Moreover they were pitifully hampered by lack of means, and the honest Deputy—such as a St. Leger or a Sydney—who paid his tradesman's bills and did not resort to extortion, found that the office involved the depletion of his private resources. And similarly with many lesser officials. Thus service in Ireland was only accepted grudgingly by the men best fitted for the task, since it was indeed exile to men of refined tastes, and hence so often the officials were of the worst type. Only those without much conscience thrived in the government posts and so they were often filled with greedy self-seekers who made what they could ere they returned to England, and certainly did not strive hard to find a solution for Ireland's difficulties. But, while it is easy to understand all this, the fact remains that the absence of the better men in the government was most unfortunate for Ireland.<sup>2</sup>

Not the least of a Deputy's or commander's difficulties was with the army. Queen Elizabeth, especially, was very tardy in her supplies, so that the pay was nearly always in arrear, and nothing could have been more destructive to the general tone of the forces. An irregularly paid sixteenth century army was, if not actually mutinous, certainly unruly, and thus it is that the force which should have been a protection to the loyal population, was more a curse than a blessing to the peaceful members of the community who had to support

<sup>1</sup> "For now the chief evil in that government is that no governor is suffered to go on with any one course, but upon the least information here of this or that he is either stopped or crossed, or other courses appointed him from thence (i.e. England) which he shall run, which how inconvenient it is, is at this hour too well felt."—Spenser, *View of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Spenser's remarks in his view of Ireland. He declared that the governors were so envious of each other's greater glory that they did not seek to excel each other in good government, but quite the contrary, so fearful were they that someone else would get the praise. Thus the country suffered and affairs were made impossible for conscientious men.—*View of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, pp. 130-31.

it. The soldiers behaved much as they liked and the officers were powerless, and seldom willing to discipline them. This disorder was in addition to that created over food and forage supplies, which, again through lack of regular funds, had to be obtained either by means of cesses—the commandeering of provisions at prices far below market rates, and often then not paid for—or by sheer unlicensed quartering of men on the inhabitants. The *Student's Book on Ireland*, written in 1560, which represents the worst abuses of the time, mentions the system of cesses as one of the greatest evils, for, besides the low prices given, no allowance was made for the loss entailed in cartage, etc. Since the soldiers were not subject to the Common Law there was no means of redress, and the book describes how, when a soldier was quartered in a house, he only paid twopence a meal and did not “contente himself with such there as the husbandman hath for his owen provision, but mislikinge the same will kill such victualles as he beste fancieth, as often as his office, pigges, capons, hens, or chickens yff any be in the house and for wante of these he ofte muste agre with him to give him clerely 15*d*. sterlinge a daie to be clerely rid and discharged of him.”<sup>1</sup>

Assuredly such a condition of affairs did not conduce to advanced husbandry either on the borders of the Pale or within it. Governors in Ireland recognised the futility of this false economy and urged that it was better to have a small army, well paid, well supplied and well equipped, and thereby able to retain any advantages it gained, rather than a costly rabble, but their recommendations were seldom heeded and the evil state of affairs continued. Nor was the actual material damage the most serious. There was also the moral injury to English prestige in the eyes of inhabitants as the representatives of Law and order brought little save pillage

<sup>1</sup> S.P. *Ireland. Elizebeth*, Vol. 5, no. 51. Cf. Spenser, who condemned the practice of cessing and declared that the soldiers demanded more than they needed.—*View of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, pp. 119–20.

and poverty in their train. Violence and disorder on one side will always encourage it on another, and since the government did not set the example of good discipline, it is scarcely surprising that the rebels were not inclined to either.

From the purely economic side the sixteenth century is, unfortunately, little less depressing, for although the most serious interference in Ireland's industries and trade came in the succeeding centuries, still the beginnings of that colonial treatment are to be found in the atmosphere of mercantilism, which pervades the arrangements for the plantations and most accounts of the conditions of the time. Actual restrictions came later, though the linen trade began to suffer from the granting of too many licenses for the export of yarn, which suited the Chester cloth trade, but was detrimental to the Irish interests. Indeed excessive granting of licenses for the transport of wool, meat, corn, etc., hurt much of Ireland's sixteenth century prosperity, but that was a common evil of the time, the real cause of the economic depression being due to the generally unsatisfactory state of affairs. Fifteenth century Irish trade enjoyed unrestricted communication with the Continent, but Elizabethan wars put a ban alternately on that with France and Spain. These restrictions were largely evaded by licenses and smuggling, but they were not without their bad effects, even if the worst bar to progress lay in the internal state of the country. Merchants eked out a precarious existence, increased by the vagaries of Elizabeth's Irish currency regulations, which were bad for foreign and English business, while the devastations of English and rebel armies alike wasted the countryside and hampered both industry and agriculture. The general economic position and the details of the various trades are, however, dealt with elsewhere. Here it is only necessary to point out the inter-connection of all sides of history ; religious questions, foreign intrigues, attempted separation of the English and Irish, etc.

These all had their influences on the purely commercial situation, although probably the most powerful factor was that of exploitation. Indeed the desire to exploit Ireland, as Spain exploited the New World for trade, industry and settlement, was behind most of the commercial policy advocated for Ireland in the sixteenth century.



## CHAPTER II

### GENERAL VIEW OF IRELAND'S ECONOMIC POSITION IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

"The Yrichemen have cause lyke to oures  
Oure londe and herres togedre defende,  
That none enmye shulde hurte ne offende  
Yreland ne us, but as one comonté  
Shulde help to kepe well aboute the see.  
Ffor they have havenes grete and godely bayes,  
Sure, wyde and depe, and of ryght good assayes,  
Att Waterforde, and coostis monye one;  
And, as men seyn, in England be there none  
Better havenes for shyppes in to ryde,  
Ne more sure for enmyes to abyde.

\* \* \* \* \*

"And well I wott that frome hens to Rome,  
And, as men sey, in alle Cristendome,  
Ys no grounde ne lond to Yreland lyche,  
So large, so gode, so plenteouse, so riche,  
That to this worde Dominus doth longe,  
Than me semyth that ryght were and not wronge  
To get that londe, and it were piteouse,  
To use to lese this hyghe name dominus."

—*Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, 1436, ed. Sir G. Warner, pp. 34-8.

IN the last chapter an attempt was made to give an interpretation of some of the outstanding features in the general history of Ireland. In this chapter it is proposed to deal with the economic side of that history during the sixteenth century and its bearings on the actual trade. If the purely political historian of Ireland is beset with many difficulties, the researcher into economic matters meets with no fewer obstacles, but with more, owing to the unsatisfactory nature of most of the available material. This especially applies to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries because so much valuable documentary evidence of those times has failed to survive the vicissitudes of Irish official records, and the loss is not made good from other sources. Thus,

while the political information of the State Papers can often be balanced and extended by references in the *Annals of Ulster*, or of the *Four Masters*, these latter works are of little, indeed almost of no use as regards economic matters. The lack of Irish Custom's Accounts or Port Books is only in part made good by the existence of the English books and accounts and, as will be shown later, the method of compilation as well as the loss of many of these, leave many serious lacunae even in that portion of the evidence. Much, therefore, has to be inferred and pieced together from very varied references.

One of the worst deficiencies lies in the absence of any general description of the ordinary conditions of the time—for instance at the end of the fifteenth century, when the Celtic resurgence was at its height and when trade appears to have been in a comparatively flourishing state. Bardic poems supply a little information, but not nearly enough. Corporation records are also disappointing, since the material they yield for the sixteenth century is often scanty and mainly confined to regulations which prove the narrowness of the guild system, but little else. Consequently ideas of Irish economic life are largely based on the observations found in very late sixteenth and early seventeenth century writings—such as those of Spenser, Payne, Derrick, Dymmok, Fynes Moryson and Sir John Davies. These writings are, of course, invaluable, since to a certain extent they afford the only information obtainable, but obviously they suffer from several limitations, especially as regards time. All wrote when the devastation of the Elizabethan wars had left its traces—in varying degrees—on the face of the country and on the life of the people. Moreover their remarks apply to rather limited portions of the country and of the populace, mainly those encountered in the wake of an army, while both Sir John Davies and Fynes Moryson were too far intellectually removed to understand the significance of what remained in the civilisation of such a different plane to their own.

Spenser, alone, sought a philosophical explanation of the customs he saw, but in the absence of real historical knowledge his poetical imagination probably led him to advance rather fantastical theories. Payne, on the contrary, wrote as a prospector to encourage undertakers for the Munster plantation and so concentrated on drawing attention to the resources of the districts he traversed. All again wrote with the very natural English prejudices of their time, but, save for bardic poems embodying the opposite extremes, little material exists to balance their statements. Nevertheless the fact remains that it is wrong to imagine that their descriptions are without these obvious limitations. This especially applies to their accounts of the native Irish and is equally true of much that is found in the State papers. Loyal members of the Pale, groaning under the burden of cesses, and chiefs, fearful of looting, did not display more wealth than necessary to the possible tax levier or free booter. And so the traveller, commenting on the degraded conditions of the people, often confounded the vicious circle of cause and effect. The general tendency of sixteenth century writers has indeed been aptly described by Geoffrey Keating, "inasmuch as it is almost according to the fashion of the beetle they act, when writing concerning the Irish, for it is the fashion of the beetle, when it lifts its head in the summer time, to go about fluttering, and not to stoop towards any delicate flower that may be in the field, or any blossom in the garden, though they be all roses or lilies, but it keeps bustling about until it meets with dung of horse or cow, and proceeds to roll itself therein. . . Whosoever should determine to make a minute search for ill customs, or an investigation into the faults of inferior people, it would be easy to fill a book with them ; for there is no country in the world without a rabble . . . howbeit the entire country is not to be disparaged on their account."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. Keating, *The History of Ireland* (Irish Texts Society, Vol. IV), pp. 5, 57, 59.

Thus a view of the economic situation is hampered by the unfortunate limitations of the available evidence ; nevertheless, bearing these limitations in mind, it is still possible to form some idea of the conditions, even during the early years of the Tudor period. That Ireland held a strong position as regards European trade in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is undoubted, and despite internal confusion, this inter-Continental traffic had descended from the very early days to which Tacitus refers in his famous remark about Ireland " Solum coelumque et ingenia cultusque hominum haud multum a Britannia differunt : melius aditus portusque per commercia et negotiatores cogniti."<sup>1</sup> One of the most striking proofs of the importance of this foreign trade in Tudor times is afforded by the fact that it was European traders, rather than the English authorities, who really knew about the Irish coasts—as both Westropp and Dunlop have pointed out when considering the subject of contemporary maps. The mariners of France, Spain and Italy, in their " portolanos," or mere coasting charts, display a sounder knowledge of the actual geographical features than does the first known English map (circa 1483) which purports to include the whole country, but in reality gives a disproportionate share to the Pale.<sup>2</sup> But if the authorities were ignorant of Irish geography, there were some in England who as early as 1436 realised her vast commercial possibilities, and in the true spirit of the day, wanted them confined to English hands. The *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye* quoted at the heading of this chapter draws attention to the " havenes grete and godely bayes," and describes the fertility " for thynges that there do growe And multiplen, like who so lust to knowe ; So large, so gode and so comodyouse, That to declare is straunge and mervelouse " in fact " in alle

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus ; Agricola 24.

<sup>2</sup> T. J. Westropp, *Brasil and the Legendary Islands of the North Atlantic*. App. Detailed Maps of Ireland, 1300-1600. *Procs. R.I. Acad.*, Vol. 30, Sec. c., p. 259. Also R. Dunlop, *Sixteenth Century Maps of Ire. Eng. Hist. Review*, Vol. 20, p. 309.



Cristendome, Ys no grounde ne lond to Yreland lyche, So large, so gode, so plenteouse, so riche," and hence the author's fear lest it should become independent under any Irish chief.<sup>1</sup> The poem is particularly interesting in that it practically sums up the policy, not of its own, but of the next century, for during the Lancastrian period there was not enough stability in England for trading interests to make much headway. With the accession of the Tudors, however, there came a change. The extinction or impoverishment of many noble families in the Wars of the Roses, as well as the fact that the Tudors looked to the middle classes for the basis of their power, gave a stimulus to mercantilist principles—a stimulus which naturally soon involved Ireland as a field for exploitation. Many times in the State Papers of the sixteenth century there occur what might be called prose versions of that early verse tract. Thus in 1572 Sir Humphrey Gilbert sent his Report entitled "The Discourse of Ireland," in which he condemns the rebel's desire to have a "monarchy among themselves" as also the aid the country is apt to have from Spaniards and others and their great yearly traffic with Ireland coming "at the least with 600 sail of ships and barks for fishing only, besides others." Further he emphasises the benefits which would grow to England if Ireland were civil and under the subjection of good laws, especially the profit to English merchants and the opportunities from the minerals and metals. He concludes with petitions for fishing rights off the south coast which are quoted in the next chapter.<sup>2</sup> That the adventurers of Elizabeth's court should look for easy profits from the lands which they were awarded in Ireland was certainly a natural theory of the age, and was partly due to the example of Spanish adventurers in the New World. Nevertheless their policy was unfortunate for Ireland. It was indeed a sad change

<sup>1</sup> *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, 1436, ed. Sir G. Warner, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> C. Car. MSS. I, pp. 422-3.



from the conciliatory policy of Henry VII and Henry VIII and was economically fatal to Ireland ; since, according to the ideas of Gilbert and others, the Irish were not to enjoy the fruits of their labour it is scarcely surprising that they became less hard working under such unfavourable conditions. It is curious to note the change which comes over the character of reports during the Tudor period. Early and middle century accounts do not deny native energy, they mainly express a desire to set up some machinery whereby the profits of trade, and above all of the Spanish trade, might be transferred to English hands. But the actual result of trying to force trade into certain channels was practically to destroy it. Fifty years later, Fynes Moryson and other writers never tired of lamenting the natives' " barbarousness " and " slothfulness ; " <sup>1</sup> but in justice to the Irish it must be admitted that the precarious tenure which they had on property, due to the Elizabethan policy of confiscations and plantations, was scarcely one to encourage much independent industry on their part. The undertakers found Irish tenants preferable because they were willing to pay higher rents, and this illustrates their industry under even fairly settled conditions, and is yet another proof of the part they took in trade before the Elizabethan disturbances became so widespread.

In fact, the sixteenth century witnessed in economic, as it did in political affairs, the reaction from the native resurgence and comparative independence of the fifteenth century. The vast influence which the native Irish had re-acquired in trade, even within the narrow area of the Pale, by 1480, is strikingly exemplified by the following Act of that date which definitely aims at preventing their opportunities, while acknowledging their part in industry and traffic. " At the request of the commons, for that whereas divers Irish merchants, lately stocked with store of goods by concourse of the English merchants in Irish land, have of late times found

<sup>1</sup> F. Moryson, *Des. of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 422.

great means to destroy and injure the markets of Athboy, Kells, Ffour, Molyngar, Oldcastle and other ancient English market towns: by these means to wit, they have commenced markets in the County of O'Reilly and the counties of O'Ferrall, at Cavan, Granard, Longford and other places, which if they be long continued will cause great riches to the King's enemies, and great poverty to the King's subjects," and therefore no English merchant was to go with merchandise or to take it from the Irish markets.<sup>1</sup> But the above Act was very similar in design to many of the Corporation Statutes which forbade trade with the Irish, and which prove, from their constant reiteration, the continued existence of the traffic, rather than the success of the restrictions.<sup>2</sup> Commercial intercourse throughout the country was the normal course of affairs, and certainly during the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century the regulations were often very slackly interpreted. Thus the Irish were not only traded with, but allowed to become artificers and merchants in the towns, and even to rise to influential civic posts as councillors and mayors—witness the Irish names found in the Custom's Accounts and town rolls. This evasion of the laws was made possible by the peculiar position which the towns in Ireland held at that period—a position more approaching that of the mediaeval German or Italian cities than the English Corporations. The Irish towns were originally favoured as forming loyal garrisons and were thus endowed with many privileges, and while the English government was too weak to interfere in their own interpretation of their rights, they were indeed loyal enough. Thus they were willing to defend themselves, or to seek defence against plundering and unruly chiefs

<sup>1</sup> Note to St. of Kilkenny, ed. J. Hardiman, Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts. Vol. II, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> eg. Galway Statutes of 1514 against conveying any Irishman aboard a ship with merchandise for sale. (Archives of Galway Hist. MSS., Comm. Rep. 10, App. V, p. 396). Cf. also Henry VIII's letter in 1536 to the town of Galway against trading with Irishmen. (C. Car. MSS., I, p. 92).

or overbearing neighbours of any extraction, but they had less prejudice than the government officials against commercial relations with the more peaceful members of the Irish community, or admitting these into the towns. So long as government policy did not involve too great a sacrifice of their economic interests they were ready to forward it, and it is noteworthy that the period of their semi-independence, which coincided with the native resurgence, was also that of their greatest prosperity. The end of the sixteenth century reveals a different state of affairs. Their success depended on the prosperity of the country, and on unrestricted trade both with the native Irish and with the Continent. When the government began to interfere effectively with the latter they became more and more unwilling to submit to the regulations. The next century witnessed further restrictions and still greater resentment on their part, which eventually led to the abrogation of most of their privileges and an increasing decline.

Galway is in many respects the most interesting city of the period, and, owing to its remoteness from the centre of government, enjoyed the greatest measure of independence. According to Vallancey the very name comes from "Gailibs," tribes of merchants, but scholars dispute the derivation.<sup>1</sup> However, later thirteen Norman families, Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Browne, D'Arcy, Ffont, Ffrench, Joyes, Kirwan, Lynch, Martin, Morris and Skerret became known as "the tribes of Galway," and their trading genius was efficacious in building up the medieval fortunes of the city.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, proud as they were of their original extraction, and anxious as

<sup>1</sup> J. Hardiman, *Hist. of Galway*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, p. 7. The Lynches were very powerful in the sixteenth century, most of the mayors being chosen from that family, and in 1529 "Mr. Richard Lynch established a custom that all ships with a Lynch in any of them that entered into the haven of Galway, should shoot their great canons at their passing by the black rock, and this is observed to this very day" (1674). Galway owed many of her finest buildings to their munificence. (Pedigree of Dr. Dominick Lynch, *Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts. Miscellany*, pp. 49-50).

they were to be protected from the fury of the O'Flaherties<sup>1</sup> and other freebooters, they were ready to trade with the surrounding Irishry, and were particularly jealous of their Continental intercourse. As regards commerce, Galway naturally looked to Spain and France rather than to England; and the import of wine in exchange for fish, beef and hides was essential to her economic welfare. Indeed so immense was this traffic that most of the rest of Ireland was supplied from her quays, and even as far east as Athboy in Meath there were vaults (of which some ruins remain) for the storage of this wine.<sup>2</sup> Among other privileges Galway claimed to be free of the Ormond prisage of wines, and, despite the Earl's objections in 1526, continued to remain free. In 1536 Henry VIII wrote his famous letter to the city, but did not urge the Butler's rights to such a powerful corporation, for his instructions are confined to forbidding Galway merchants to forestall those of Limerick,<sup>3</sup> or to trade with Irishmen, and to urging them to wear English clothes and to prevent supplies reaching the O'Briens or others when they were at war with the Lord Deputy.<sup>4</sup> The independence of the city was further confirmed in the renewed charter of 1545 whereby Henry VIII granted to the Corporation, the port of Galway and arm of the sea between the Arran islands and the town, so that all ships thus entering were free of toll, lastage, passage, portage, murage, pavage, poundage and other customs. Wine landed at the quay was reaffirmed to be free of prisage, and the patent concludes with the right that the mayor, bailiff and commonalty might export, *wherever they pleased*, any merchandise from the town. All that the king reserved to himself were the usual rents, mainly the custom of every last

<sup>1</sup> Recorded on an ancient gateway.

<sup>2</sup> J. Hardiman, *Hist. of Galway*, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> There was continual jealousy between the two towns, and in 1524 a bad quarrel occurred between David Comyn and some Galway merchants. (J. Hardiman, *Hist. of Galway*, p. 77).

<sup>4</sup> C. Car. MSS., I, p. 92.



of hides known as the "cocket."<sup>1</sup> Provided with such generous measures of fiscal autonomy, Galway continued to thrive. In 1568 an Italian visitor relates how he saw, at one view, while at mass in a private house, "the blessed sacrament in the hands of the priest, boats passing up and down the river, a ship entering the port in full sail, a salmon killed with a spear, and hunter and hounds pursuing a deer; upon which he observed, that although he had travelled the greatest part of Europe, he had never before witnessed a sight which combined so much variety and beauty."<sup>2</sup> But Galway's great days were then drawing to a close. In 1569 Fitton became President of Connaught and in the attempt to effect a conquest of the West, Galway suffered. Peaceful relations with the inhabitants of the surrounding districts were rendered almost impossible by the state of war, and the town was constantly attacked—indeed, when visited by Stanihurst, he found it very much decayed.<sup>3</sup> In 1579 the privileges were renewed to correspond with those of Waterford and Drogheda,<sup>4</sup> but the precious right of exemption from prisage was taken away when Ormond instituted proceedings against the Corporation in the Court of Chancery in 1584.<sup>5</sup> In addition to the late century restrictions against Spanish trade—which, despite licenses, affected Galway adversely—this was a serious blow. However, although less prosperous in 1614 than in Henry VIII's days, Galway still retained some of her old distinction. Thus Sir Oliver St. John found the town small, but was favourably impressed with the "fair and stately buildings" with their fronts of hewed stone.<sup>6</sup> Some foreign traffic still went on, and in this connection Heylin, circa 1610, relates an amusing incident of how "an outlandish merchant meeting with an Irishman,

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls. Ire., Vol. I, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> J. Hardiman, *Hist. of Galway*, pp. 84-8.

<sup>3</sup> J. Hardiman, *Hist. of Galway*, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, p. 86.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, p. 91.

<sup>6</sup> C. Car. MSS., VI, p. 295.



demanding in what part of Galloway Ireland stood, as if Galloway had been the name of the island and Ireland only the name of the town."<sup>1</sup>

Limerick was the only other town of much importance in the West, and thus the intense jealousy between the merchants of the two was very natural. However, despite all the efforts to forestall the Limerick markets, Galway could not prevent her from taking an appreciable share in the Spanish wine trade, and still less from exporting the products—and especially corn—of the rich neighbouring districts known then as Kennory and Conelagh. Payne states that they were called "the gardens of the land for the varietie and great plentie of all graine and fruites; and also there is more plentie of venison, fish and foule then elsewhere in Ireland, although in every place there is great store."<sup>2</sup> Travellers were usually impressed with the town's natural advantages. William Body wrote to Cromwell in 1536 that it was "a wondrous proper city" standing environed by the River Shannon, and might be called "Little London for the situation and the plenty."<sup>3</sup> Stanihurst admired the navigable properties of the Shannon which made it possible for a ship of 200 tons burden to sail right up to the quays sixty miles from the sea.<sup>4</sup> As in Galway, the buildings were fine; Stanihurst calls them "sumptuous and substantial,"<sup>5</sup> but, again like Galway, Limerick suffered at the end of the century. When Sir John Davies saw it in 1606 it was still "a town of Castles, compassed with the fairest walls that ever I saw," but the plenty which made Body compare it to London was no longer there—"the fair structures," contained nothing but "sluttishness and poverty within."<sup>6</sup>

On the South East coast Waterford held a position

<sup>1</sup> J. Hardiman, *Hist. of Galway*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> R. Payne, *Des. of Ire. Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts*, Vol. I, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> C. Car. MSS., I, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> R. Stanihurst, *Des. of Ire.*, (in Holinshed's *Chronicles*), p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>6</sup> C. Car. MSS., 1603-06, p. 469.

somewhat analogous to that of Galway on the West. Indeed in general importance that city was second only to Dublin, while, as regards trade, and especially export trade, it was superior to the capital. This eminence was largely due to its situation and magnificent harbour—hence the name *larga porta*, where it was reputed that ships of 300 to 400 tons could lie at the quays inside the fortifications, and thus traffic for the argosies of Spain, France and Flanders was made easy, besides the obvious cross-channel trade with England. Unlike Limerick, Waterford was not surrounded by a specially rich agricultural district, but the comparative barrenness of the soil was recompensed by the “sundrie commodities which the river yeeldeth . . . plentiful and abundant of all sorts and kinds of fishes,”<sup>1</sup> and as will be seen from the Custom’s Accounts there was a wealth of herrings off the coast. Stanihurst found the city “properlie builded,” but compact, owing to the thick buildings and narrow streets. What he most admired was the character of the towns people whom he found “pregnant in conceiving, quick in taking, sure in keeping . . . warie in all their publik affairs, slow in the determining of matters of weight, loving to looke ere they leape.” He also gave them credit for being hospitable to strangers and for their industry, the men being addicted to traffic, the women to carding and spinning and thus deserving their fame for producing the best *aqua vitæ* (whiskey) and rugs in Ireland.<sup>2</sup> Owing to Waterford’s unswerving loyalty during the Simnel and Warbeck campaigns she was given the proud title of “*urbs intacta*,” and as a mark of favour Henry VIII sent a Bearing sword to be borne before the Mayor.<sup>3</sup> Probably owing to her situation nearer the centre of government, Waterford never attained to quite the same degree of independence as Galway, although her privileges were extensive.

<sup>1</sup> R. Holinshed, *Chronicles of Ire.*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> R. Stanihurst, *Des. of Ire.* (Printed in Holinshed’s *Chronicles*), p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> C. S.P. Ire., 1509-73 (1536), p. 17.

Thus Holinshed enumerates "That no ship shall be laden nor unladen, but at the citie of Waterford, and there to paie all such customes and duties as belong and are due for their merchandize ; also that they have the prisage wines and the jurisdiction of the admeraltie, within the limits of the said river . . . they have a maior and officers of the staple yearlie to be chosen, who have the liberties for taking of statutes and recognisances staple, not onelie within their owne towne and concerning themselves, but also of sundrie towns in Leinster and Mounster and the counties of Waterford, Kilkennie, Wexford and Tipporarie. Also they have libertie from time to time to transport, lade and carrie awaie coine, vittels, woll, horses and hawks and to licence anie other within the limits of their jurisdiction to doo the same."<sup>1</sup> As will be illustrated in later chapters, Waterford merchants obtained many trading licenses when the embargoes were imposed against foreign trade, but their addiction to Continental traffic—though made use of for information about Spanish intrigues—was not regarded favourably, and the devotion of the "urbs intacta" was less evident a century after Simnel's days. According to Spenser, Waterford and Cork were the least willing of all the towns to be taxed for the support of garrisons, but as they offered "an ingate to the Spaniards most fitly" and drew such wealth from Spanish trade, he thought that they especially should be so burdened.<sup>2</sup>

Wexford stood in somewhat the same relation to Waterford that Limerick did to Galway, but there was no doubt as to the inferiority of Wexford's harbour, and her decay was as much due to her barred haven as to other factors. This explains the small cargoes brought by Wexford boats and their low tonnage, however, it does seem to have forced her merchants to provide their own shipping as few foreign or English vessels were small enough to enter the haven. Owing to

<sup>1</sup> R. Holinshed, *Chronicles of Ire.*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> Spenser, *View of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 178.

her accessibility from the Wicklow Mountains, Wexford suffered badly from the depredations of the Kavanaghs, especially during the time of Art McMurrough, and later appears to have been more affected by the native resurgence than any other town.' Stanihurst records that at one time an Irishman travelling in the Pale and coming to Wexford would have been instructed to speak English or bring an interpreter, but that by about 1578 the people had "so acquainted themselves with the Irish as that they have made a mingle mangle or gallimaufreie of both the languages . . . as commonlie the inhabitants of the meaner sort speake neither good English nor good Irish."<sup>1</sup> Waterford was not accused of forestalling Wexford markets, but there was inter-municipal jealousy over the payment of customs. Eventually, in 1562, the arbitrators made the award that the mayor, bailiffs and free citizens of Waterford were to be for ever acquitted and discharged of all manner of customs within the town of Wexford.<sup>2</sup>

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Cork made good use of her "royal haven" and ranked next to Waterford in commercial importance. Similarly she depended largely on Continental traffic and in 1543 Lord Deputy St. Leger stated that she claimed the right of trading in enemies' goods in time of war.<sup>3</sup> She was so far successful in her claim that in 1576 Elizabeth's grant to the municipality of the power to appoint their own gauger and searcher included the licence to trade in time of war with "foreigners and enemies, excepting pirates, in any goods, excepting arms and munitions of war, foreigners and enemies trading not to be molested in the city and port."<sup>4</sup> But although Cork was thus enabled to keep up a considerable trade even late in the

<sup>1</sup> R. Stanihurst, *Des. of Ireland* (printed in *Holinshed's Chronicles*), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, *Ire. Vol. I*, p. 472.

<sup>3</sup> C. S.P. *Ire.* 1509-73, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> Rep. Dep. Keeper of Public Records in the *Ire. Fiants. Rep.* 12, App. V, p. 179-80.



century, she could not help suffering from the general economic depression of Munster after the Desmond risings. Moreover she became a convenient prey for outlaws and Stanihurst found the citizens so fearful of their neighbours, that they seldom intermarried with them, and were thus all related.<sup>1</sup> Except in matters of foreign trade, Cork's privileges were by no means as extensive as those of Waterford, and this was rather a grievance. In 1585 when they petitioned to be incorporated, they also asked the Queen for "such other privileges in all civil and criminal causes whatsoever as Waterford hath." They further pointed out that Waterford possessed the right to take a toll of fish from all boats fishing in the harbour for the upkeep of the "Tower of the Passage," which protected shipping, and that, as Cork maintained a similar fort called "Blackrock" to resist pirates and other invasion, a like privilege should be granted.<sup>2</sup>

All accounts are agreed in condemning Dublin's bad harbour—a haven barred and "made less commodious by those hills of sand,"<sup>3</sup> and in praising the beauty of the city and the remarkably fine surroundings Camden describes Dublin as "the royal city of Ireland, its most noble mart and chief seat of justice, defended with strong walls, adorned with beautiful buildings, and well peopled with inhabitants,"<sup>4</sup> while Stanihurst emphasised the hospitality of the citizens and the attractions of the countryside. "If you would traverse hills they are not far off. If champion (level) ground it lieth of all parts. If you be delited with fresh water, the famous river called the Liffie . . . runneth fast by. If you will take the view of the sea, it is at hand."<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless the bad haven was a serious disadvantage, and her economic importance was almost entirely due

<sup>1</sup> R. Stanihurst, *Des. of Ire.* (printed in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, p. 25).

<sup>2</sup> C. S.P. Ire. 1601-03, p. 593.

<sup>3</sup> F. Moryson, *Des. of Ire.*, ed. H. Morley, p. 416.

<sup>4</sup> Camden, W., *Britannia*, ed. R. Gough, III, 549.

<sup>5</sup> R. Stanihurst, *Des. of Ire.* (printed in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, p. 20)



to her position as the political capital of Ireland. Her export trade was far inferior to her import trade—Cogan, in 1611, reckoned it to be less than a quarter of the whole<sup>1</sup>—and the importation consisted mainly of luxuries which the merchants bought in London and Chester<sup>2</sup> and sold at enhanced prices to the English members of the government resident there.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, although the municipal authorities were hospitable, the merchants were not only inclined to profiteering, (a vice common where there is much importation) but also to a very rigid interpretation of their trading privileges. As early as 1538 Sir Richard Gresham wrote to Cromwell complaining that they refused to allow London merchants to trade in the city, and besought him to force the Recorder of Dublin (then in London) to take orders that London merchants should enjoy the liberties of Dublin.<sup>4</sup> In 1546, however, Henry VIII's charter confirmed King John's grant that "no foreign merchant should buy within the city, of any stranger, corn, leather or wool, but only from the citizens themselves."<sup>5</sup> Nearly a century later Barnaby Rich accused them of keeping all the trade and traffic to themselves "no man to buy or sell within their liberties, unless he be a freeman," and also declared that when any imposition was laid on the city they would exact it from strangers "that are neither free, nor have any manner (of) dealing in the citty, but to spend their money, which only the cittizens doth gaine by; and there is neither merchandise, nor any manner of commodity that is brought from Spaine, from France, from Flanders, or from any other port of England or Scotland, but they will have the whole bargain to themselves, not suffering any man that is not free, to

<sup>1</sup> Opinion of Robert Cogan touching the Customs (1611). C. Car. MSS., VI, 174-6.

<sup>2</sup> A statement fully proved by the Custom's Accounts.

<sup>3</sup> Barnaby Rich, *A New Description of Ireland*, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> C. S.P. Ire. 1509-73, p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Vol. I, p. 132.

buy for his owne provision, no, not so much as a drinking glasse, but it must bee had from them, and by that meanes he shall be inforced to pay double the price.”<sup>1</sup> Such municipal selfishness was a common feature of the age where the privileges of the oligarchic town governments and guilds were a serious barrier to the free play of economic forces. Regulations of bodies, originally meant to protect the consumer and to maintain the standard of the produce, were apt to degenerate into narrow-minded factions only too ready to prevent any individual development which might threaten their monopolies, their revenues, or their power,<sup>2</sup> and apparently Dublin merchants roused much resentment. Possibly the fact that they engaged in less direct foreign trade than those of Waterford and Cork, may have really made them more insular in their outlook, for naturally the major portion of Dublin’s traffic was with England, and above all, with Chester and Bristol. In the latter, free citizens of Dublin could exercise the valuable right of exemption from the payment of Custom, hence the entry in the Accounts “*exoneratam per cartam*” opposite so many of the Dublin merchants’ bills of lading. Even when the entire amount was not excused there was usually a liberal “allowance” deducted, surely an incentive to almost exclusive import of goods via Chester. Since Dublin’s trade was thus mainly based on the retail of imports to officials, and as she continued to be the seat of government, there was not such a serious change in her conditions as in that of many other towns, although in 1597 the citizens complained of their impoverishment owing to the large support that they gave the army.<sup>3</sup> Dublin had always lain open to attacks from the tribes on the Wicklow Mountains, and in 1598 was still annoyed by them; consequently a strong watch was kept lest they should

<sup>1</sup> Barnaby Rich; *A New Des. of Ire.*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> S. H. O’Grady, *Strafford in Ireland*, Vol. I, pp. 250-64.

<sup>3</sup> Sir J. Gilbert, *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin*, Vol. III, pp. 522-3.

again set the suburbs on fire, as happened earlier in the century.<sup>1</sup>

The other Irish ports must be dealt with more briefly. New Ross, Dungarvan, Youghal, Kinsale and Dingle<sup>2</sup> were all of considerable importance for the first half of the sixteenth century, because they acted as the distributing centres of their districts for the export of fish and hides, and gained from the import of Continental wines and the concourse of Spanish and French fishing fleets off the coast. But they were smaller and less privileged municipalities than Waterford and Cork and were unable to survive so well the attacks of the rebels, the desolation of Munster and the restrictions on their foreign trade. Their decline can be clearly traced in the Custom's Accounts. Thus early century books show an appreciable amount of their shipping, especially at Bristol and Bridgewater, while middle and late century records bear witness to a steady decrease. New Ross, Dungarvan and Kinsale suffered most at the end of the period. Cogan in 1611 could only describe New Ross—once an influential port—as “a poor ruined town, out of trades but one of the best harbours in the kingdom.” Dungarvan in his time was only “a very poor fisher town,” and Kinsale “a poor town ruined by the late rebellion.” Youghal was in a slightly better position as the Munster undertakers carried on most of their traffic (especially in wood) from her “commodious haven.”<sup>3</sup>

The decline of the south-western Irish ports was only in part recompensed by the rise of new towns north of Dublin. Thus Drogheda (Tredagh), Dundalk, Carlingford and Carrickfergus steadily increase in importance during the last half of the century. Drogheda had been

<sup>1</sup> Des. of Ire. 1598, ed. E. Hogan, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Dingle suffered badly from the depredations of the Earl of Desmond. Hitchcock, R., *Dingle in the Sixteenth Century*. Kilk. Arch. Soc. Transactions, Vol. II, p. 140.

<sup>3</sup> Opinion of Robert Cogan touching the Customs. C. Car. MSS., VI, pp. 174-6.

of note earlier, but from 1550 on acquired fresh influence through her vast export of yarn to Chester. Indeed much the same may be said of the others for the Accounts show little save yarn, sheep fells and tallow in the outward traffic, and thus their rise was not a real recompense to the country for the decline of the Munster towns. Owing to their geographical situation they depended mainly on English traffic, and were easily subordinated to the economic interests of Chester and Liverpool. The export of such large quantities of yarn was detrimental to Ireland and compared ill with the foreign trade once carried on by New Ross, Dungarvan and Kinsale.

## CHAPTER III

### FISH

" Be not sparing,  
Leave off swearing,  
Buy my herring  
Fresh from Malahide,  
Better never was tried.  
Come, eat them with pure fresh butter and mustard,  
Their bellies are soft and as white as a custard.  
Come, sixpence a dozen, to get me some bread,  
Or, like my own herrings, I soon shall be dead."

*Jonathan Swift.*

### MARKET WOMEN'S CRIES

#### HERRINGS

Fish was undoubtedly the most important product of sixteenth century Ireland. This might be deduced from contemporary reports which are unanimous in acknowledging the resources both inland and coastal. Derrick's *Image*, which lacks Spenser's genius, but is none the less emphatic for its quaintness, describes the rivers :

" Wherein were sondrie store of beasts, in waters that doe live,  
To whom their proper names I am unable for to give,  
Yet were thei such as doe maintaine and serve for common-  
wealth,  
By yeelding plentie to the soile, where store of people  
dwelth." <sup>1</sup>

The State Papers contain many complaints of the intercourse between the rebels and the Spanish fishing

<sup>1</sup> J. Derrick, *Image of Ireland*, 1581. Somer's Tracts, Vol. I, 1809, p. 571.



fleets off the coast. The deep sea fishing especially, and indeed a great part of the whole industry, was cosmopolitan rather than national, since the Irish banks were as much sought after by European fishermen during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as were afterwards those of Newfoundland. The extent of the export to the continent soon attracted the attention of Henry VIII, and in 1515 among the Statutes he proposed to the Earl of Kildare was the following: "That whereas merchaunts convey out of this land into Fraunce, Brittain, and other strange partes, salmonds, herrings, dry lengs, haaks and other fishe, so abundantly that they leve none within the land to vitall the King's subiects here, in so much that uneth [i.e. scarcely] any such fishe may be had for mony," and then follow regulations that surety should be given to the King's Customers that each merchant should "leve within the lande the thirde parte of his fishe."<sup>1</sup> Probably this was rather a device to ensure the Customs, than the result of real fear of scarcity in the country. Later in the century one of the chief objections to the Spanish fishing fleets on the south and west was that they paid "No due to the Queen's Majestie knowen,"<sup>2</sup> although a statute of Edward IV imposed a tax of 13/4 and 2/- yearly on foreign vessels coming to Ireland to fish. It was, however, long disregarded, and the attempt to revive it in 1577 and 1581 by grant of the collectorship to Thomas Hillinge and Henry Sheffield respectively, does not appear to have been very successful. In the second grant a rent of £20 a year was demanded but nothing more is heard of the tax,<sup>3</sup> and in 1601 a different method was suggested. Every barrel of herring or salmon packed in Ireland was to be inspected and, if found satisfactory, was to be sealed with the Queen's seal on payment of 3*d.*; and there was a further tax of one

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS., Comm. App. ninth Rep. 1884. MSS. Duke of Leinster Maynooth, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P. Ire. 1509-73, p. 403 (1569).

<sup>3</sup> Dep. Keeper P. R. Ireland. Rep. 13 App. IV Fiants 3055 and 3742.

night's fishing of every boat every season. The same note on Irish causes disapproves of allowing these rights to private persons.<sup>1</sup> But there were never effective means of enforcing regulations and most of the foreign trade must have gone quite free. Apparently the simplest way of raising any revenue for the Crown was by farming the Customs to private persons.

A good idea of the whole situation is given in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's *Discourse* of 1572, though his remarks apply to the south-west in particular. He declared that the Spaniards came with "at least 600 sail of ships, and barques for fishing only, besides others," and was impressed with the trade thereby obtained in Cork and Kerry. He petitioned for an island in the harbour of Baltimore where the Spaniards lay aground during the season, which he would fortify; also for the custom of every sixth or tenth fish from the Spaniards and Biscayans fishing off the Foreland of Balskay (the Blaskets) and "to have granted unto me and my partners the privilege and only traffic with the lords and people of Ireland for such Irish wares and commodities as is now traded by the Spaniards and Irishmen only." As an additional justification for his petition he related what was possibly very true, that "the wild Irish and savage people" often cut the cables on the hawse of fishermen and merchants there that the ships might run on the rocks and enable them to get the spoil.<sup>2</sup> In 1580 Lord Justice Pelham wrote of Munster to much the same effect, and suggested that all the principal havens and creeks should be fortified and garrisoned to prevent "the commodities which the Irish make by entertaining pirates, and also Portingalls and Spaniards that yearly come to fish in these harbours, bringing with them powder, calives (a kind of musket), sculls, targets, swords and other munition."<sup>3</sup> But it was impossible

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P. Ire. 1601-03, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> C. Car. MSS., I, p. 423.

<sup>3</sup> C. Car. MSS., II, p. 285.

to keep an adequate watch on the coasts and especially on the west and north where the fisheries were particularly fine. Except round Galway they were entirely in the hands of natives or foreigners, and so the fish were sent abroad. Through his north-western possessions O'Donnel became the "best lord of fish in Ireland" and exchanged fish with foreign merchants (generally for wine) on such a scale as to win on the Continent the title of "King of Fish."<sup>1</sup> In 1543 he offered the king among his other gifts, "halfe the heareings or other fish taken at Arran and Inishenincadrin" (Irish-vic-a-duirn, off Donegal), alone a valuable present.<sup>2</sup> Even by 1611 the administration knew little of a great part of the country from which it hoped to raise taxes. Thus Robert Cogan in his official report admitted that his knowledge of the towns in Ireland lying northwards was small, and that only by conjecture. He merely knew that they consisted "chiefly of fishing salmon and herring which is in great abundance and may yield the king a great profit being carefully looked into."<sup>3</sup> Judging by O'Donell's trade the latter part of his remark was very true.

It is not surprising that Ireland's fisheries were a constant source of irritation to England. Though it is impossible to gauge exactly the amount of the export to the Continent, all available evidence shows that it was very considerable. That to England was only a comparatively small portion of the whole, and yet, as will appear later, it was extensive. Not only did the Government dislike the constant supply of arms and opportunities for seditious intercourse from abroad, but they considered that the whole Continental fish trade was a breach in the economic policy of the century. Being so largely carried on by natives it was an important branch of commerce a great part of whose profits were

<sup>1</sup> C. Car. MSS., I, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. 15th Rep. App. part III, p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> C. Car. MSS., VI, p. 174-6.

not enjoyed by the English. Not only did evaded Customs rankle, but the gains lost to English merchants from the indirect as well as from the direct trade were a constant irritation. Gilbert's report is a good example of the current feeling.

For the Anglo-Irish side there is fortunately fuller information owing to the Customs Accounts and Port Books. The trade was confined rather more to the south and the south-east coasts, and from the names in the Custom's Accounts was principally in the hands of loyal townsmen or English merchants. Probably many of the cargoes were bought from native fishermen and shipped by more influential traders, sometimes clearly stated to be factors for men in England who also sent their own boats to the banks. This must have been done regularly, though there is not much evidence on the subject. A west-country merchant's "directions for divers trades" describes sending a boat to fish the out islands of Scotland and "Lowghfully" (Lough Foyle) as a matter of course. The ship was to be ready at Michaelmas, the best time for cod and ling, and was to carry "all sortes of corrupt wines" to sell in the north of Ireland where the "samon Fishinge is." Incidentally he gives the valuable note that a wey of salt was needed for every 1,000 fish.<sup>1</sup> There is only one fragmentary Customs Account for Gloucester (usually included in Bristol) during the century, and that only the "Custome Inwards" for one week in January, 1592. Nevertheless, it has some rare information because it mentions the fish which were brought "of the merchants' own killing" (and which therefore were not liable to custom) in addition to those which he bought, and for which he paid Custom at Gloucester. There may often have been the same proportion of non-dutiable fish from the Irish coasts on board, but no exact estimate can be made as generally only the quantity liable to custom is recorded. In that week 97½ lasts of herrings (12

<sup>1</sup> N. S. B. Gras, *Evolution of the English Corn Market*, p. 430.



barrels to the last) were shipped from Ireland to Gloucester, 21 lasts and 8 barrels having been bought at, or sent from, Waterford, and therefore paying £6 5s. 6d., the rest landing free. The following is an example of the entries. "The 7 day of Januarye. Ex le Elizabeth of Newhnam of the burthen of 15 tonns John Swate master from the cittie of Waterford to the cittie of Gloucester, for 7 lasts of white hearings that is to saye. In the name of the same John Swate 6 last, dew for custome of 1 last, the rest were of his owne killinge—6/-. In the name of Hugh Aylwaye of Tewkesburye 11 last whereof were shotten hearings 14 barrels, so is dew for costome 8/6."<sup>1</sup> Similar entries account for ten more boats belonging to Gloucester and the neighbourhood, all returning from the southern Irish grounds, while there are only two other vessels on the list and they came from Rochelle. To some such extent did the Irish trade once monopolise certain towns of the west of England! Nor are the above isolated instances of English merchants' "owne killinge." A Port Book for 1607 records two Poole boats coming from "Killeborge in Ireland" (i.e. probably Killybegs in Donegal) with 78 and 124 barrels respectively, of white herrings "of English taking."<sup>2</sup> But though these documents imply that much of the fish imported was of English dealers' "owne killinge" they may not be altogether representative. The only exact figures obtainable are those of the quantities paying Custom, and they are sufficiently impressive. It is well, however, to remember, when considering them, that half as much again should be added if an idea of the total transport of fish is to be gained.

The portion of the trade, then, which the Custom's Accounts represent is that of the Anglo-Irish exporters and the English importers. Tabulated forms of a few records are appended and they afford some statistics of the century, but the accounts also contain many other

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C. A. 47.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.P.B. 872 Poole.



details which show that there was a greater variety of fish sent than might at first have been imagined. In reading the Customs' Accounts certain difficulties arise, not only in interpreting the measures of capacity when applied to different commodities, but as between varieties of the same commodity. Thus it is rather hard to define what was always meant by the terms last and burden. For cod and herring the former was equivalent to about 12 barrels, for red herring and pilchard it might mean from 10,000 to 13,000 fish, but, beyond the fact that it was a big measure, no accurate estimate can be found when applied to salted fish, etc. Burden, again, was an indefinite, but much used, expression for all kinds of fish. To judge from the values, however, it does not imply a great quantity.<sup>1</sup> The measures butt and pipe were sometimes interchangeable and equalled about four barrels, half a tun, or a quarter hogshead, while kilderkins and firkins were supposed to represent half and quarter barrels respectively, but even these more definite terms varied in capacity in accordance with the commodity, and they were in the sixteenth century all used for fish.

Salmon, "the sea-smelling salmon," "the King-Fish of the river," of Irish poetry, was a favourite food of native chief and English merchant alike, and thus was the most highly prized of all the fish exported. Considering its comparative rarity amazingly large quantities were sent, especially to Bristol—some hundreds of pounds worth arriving there annually—the value averaging round about £4 the hogshead and 30/- the pipe, with lesser amounts such as barrels and firkins in proportion. Herrings should be mentioned next, though indeed in quantity they made up for their lesser individual value and were really the staple item of export. They were classified as white, "*allecia alba*," i.e. fresh or slightly

<sup>1</sup> According to K.R.C.A. 192 Bristol, 1504, salt fish were estimated at £1 the hundred and at 3/4 the burden, i.e. about seventeen large fish, but it is possible that only the larger fish were counted separately and that a burden contained more than seventeen.

salted, and in contrast to the "*allecia rubra*," or red herrings which were smoked, and as "full" (*plenum*), i.e. charged with roe and "shotten" (*vacuum*) those which had spawned. The full white herrings were naturally the best and so were valued at two to three times the amount of the others. For instance, at the Cornish ports in 1562 the full white herrings from Dungarvan are estimated at £9 the last, while the white shotten are about £3.<sup>1</sup> Red herrings are usually recorded by the two measures peculiar to herrings—the mease or meise<sup>2</sup> (500) and the cade consisting of six score to the hundred or five long hundreds. A last was therefore equivalent to about 20 cades. The yearly import of herrings from Ireland at Bristol and Bridgewater especially, ran into many lasts and at the former in 1504 amounted to £1,442 os. od. worth<sup>3</sup>—a considerable sum of money in those days.

Hake may be ranked next in importance. They are supposed only to have been known, at least by that name, since the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, and as there was no proper mediaeval Latin equivalent the Customers were free to give their very liberal interpretations to the spelling of the word. Hake appear variously as "haak" or "hackes," and might be specified as dried (*sicci* or *siccadi*), wet (*humecii*) fine or coarse. They are recorded by numbers rather than by measures of capacity or weight, and apparently the coarse hake were the highest priced.<sup>4</sup> Bristol imported thousands, especially early in the Tudor period, as is shown in a book for the year 1504, which gives a total of 90,999, value £455 3s. 6d.<sup>5</sup> In 1514 Bridgewater got 16,800, value £84 os. od.,<sup>6</sup> and even the smaller ports got fair numbers.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{4}{11}$

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{1}{11}$  Bristol, 1504. Red herrings valued at 5/- the mease, but 1/- a hundred when estimated by the hundred.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{1}{11}$  Bristol, 1504.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{1}{11}$  1506-7. At Poole from Youghal 260 coarse hake, £5 13s. 4d. 400 hake, £4 5s. od.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{1}{11}$ , <sup>6</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{2}{11}$ .

<sup>7</sup> i.e. early in the century. e.g. K.R.C.A.  $\frac{2}{11}$  1507 Dartmouth. 1,050 at 6/8 per 100, £3 10s. od.

Mention of pike (*dentrix*) in these accounts is particularly interesting in view of the fact that they are considered by some to be of alien origin in Ireland. They may have been introduced by the fourteenth century settlers as they are unknown in early Celtic literature, but certainly by the sixteenth century they had become thoroughly at home in Irish waters and appear to have somewhat ousted the "merry trout," so beloved of the bards. While entries of pike are frequent among the exports, those of trout are almost negligible. The pike were sent mainly to the smaller southern English towns, but seldom (classed separately at least) to Bristol, and the quantities fall off very noticeably towards the end of the century. At the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth, however, they appear as coming regularly from Youghal, Dungarvan, Cork and Kinsale to the Cornish ports, Padstow, Penryn, Penzance, etc.<sup>1</sup> In 1507 Dartmouth imported 3,850, value £12 16s. 8d., and averaging 6/8 the hundred.<sup>2</sup> Like hake, pike were usually recorded by number and were sometimes also specifically stated to be *siccadi*.<sup>3</sup>

These coarser fish must have formed the bulk of the great quantities of unspecified salt fish. Presumably the poorer specimens were kept for this class, as the value per "burden" (by which they were generally entered) is seldom high and often as low as 3/4. At Bristol in 1492, 510½ burdens are estimated at £89 16s. 8d.<sup>4</sup> In addition to hake and pike the *pisci salsi* must have included many other fish which are known to have been much exported from Ireland and which are not so often entered separately, such as cod, haddock, whiting, pilchard and bream. In the early accounts cod are called by variations of the word *mulvellus*—"milward," "milwelles," "milwyne" being the chief, also as "grenefish" if unsalted and ling if salted. As thirteen burdens of mylwyne and ling coming to Poole from

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 1½.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 20½.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 1½.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 20.

Youghal in 1504 are only valued at £2 12s. *od.* it was not then an expensive fish.<sup>1</sup> Probably, however, cod, haddock and whiting were often indiscriminately styled whiting (scalpin) in the municipal accounts, and white-fish or "whitefyshe" in the Custom's Accounts. White fish, again, are more frequently mentioned in the records of the Cornish towns. In 1513 Ilfracombe (then a very small place) imported 22 barrels, value £12 10s. *od.*,<sup>2</sup> Dartmouth and Exeter in 1507, 280 fish, value £2 15s. *od.*<sup>3</sup> By the end of the sixteenth century the terms haddock and cod are found, a Bristol entry for 1588 showing 50 haddock for 1/8 from Ross,<sup>4</sup> and "2 burdens of cod-fish" sent from Wexford in 1591.<sup>5</sup> Another fish which may have been included as white fish was the pollack or "pollock." They are still caught in fair numbers off the southern Irish coasts and as whiting pollock is like cod, it seems probable that they were often classed together. The Bristol books sometimes record them at an average value of 5/- the hundred,<sup>6</sup> but like cod, etc., they may not always have been mentioned separately.

Another variety of fish which occurs in the early accounts of small ports (where with a lesser volume of trade the Customers perhaps had more time to differentiate, when recording the Bills of Lading) is "the broadfish." Presumably it was a general name for all kinds of flat fish which may have been merged, later in the century, and at bigger ports, into the classification of "salt fish." Certainly broadfish are not mentioned by name at Bristol, but they must have been sent there as well as to the Cornish ports. It is hardly likely, though possible, that the people of Exeter and Dartmouth, who in 1485 imported 58 quarters, value £14 15s. *od.*, from Youghal, Waterford and Dungarvan, alone had a preference for them.<sup>7</sup>

Among other fish which were sent fairly regularly,

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{120}{10}$ .

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{201}{13}$ .

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{201}{9}$ .

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{24}{3}$ .

<sup>5</sup> K.R.P.B.  $\frac{1131}{3}$ .

<sup>6</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 11<sup>o</sup>, 12<sup>o</sup> etc.

<sup>7</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{12}{1}$ .



though not in great quantities, are eels, seals and porpoises. Their mention at intervals adds variety to the records of Bristol, where the common eels, valued at  $6/8$  the barrel, were evidently less popular than the more imported pimper eels at double the value.<sup>1</sup> There were also the conger, or sea eels, while one entry at Poole in 1504 is for "80 pelles anguelarum morlynges" (skinned eels?) for  $2/8$ , but no further information is given of this curious item.<sup>2</sup> Porpoises ("porpas") were sent by the barrel and hogshead, valued at 5/- and £1 respectively. Presumably their flesh was more used for the extraction of oil and fat than as an article of food, while seals, averaging  $6/8$  each, may well have served both purposes. One Bristol clerk evidently felt uncertain of his Latin, for in his first entry for a seal he quaintly records "pro uno pisco vocato—a seale,"<sup>3</sup> while another book mentions a half seal for  $3/4$ .<sup>4</sup> Several of the Cornish ports show the export of clams from Ireland. It is hard to ascertain what exactly was then meant by the term, beyond the fact that it probably refers to some variety of bivalve. Possibly clams were oysters, since according to Fynes Moryson the Irish oysters were preferred to the English,<sup>5</sup> and as their artificial cultivation was not then practised, they must have been more difficult to obtain than now. At the same time the high average value of 5/- each renders it unlikely. Also they were usually sent in small numbers—three, four or five at a time, and seldom more than twenty in one bill of lading.<sup>6</sup>

In general the Accounts show that fish, other than salmon and herrings, came chiefly from the southern Irish towns, Dungarvan—which according to Robert Cogan's report in 1611 was still remarkable for the abundance of hake taken there<sup>7</sup>—Ross, Cork, Youghal, even Dingle and Kinsale, the last named long retaining

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 1518,  $\frac{120}{2}$ .

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{120}{10}$ .

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{120}{2}$ . Bristol, 1518.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{120}{2}$ . Bristol, 1504.

<sup>5</sup> Fynes Moryson, *Des. of Ire.*, ed. H. Morley, p. 423.

<sup>6</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{120}{2}$  Ilfracombe, 1588.

<sup>7</sup> C. Car. MSS., VI, pp. 174-6.



the reputation of its harbour for the fishing of pilchard, herring and hake.<sup>1</sup> Hence there was more variety early in the century before the partial ruin of these towns, and when they were able to trade extensively with Cornwall. While Waterford and Wexford supplied unlimited herrings to Bristol, the smaller Munster towns sent the more varied cargoes. A general corroboration of that fact is to be found in Robert Payne's description of Ireland in 1581 for the "inducement" of English colonists. He praised the general fishing facilities, but said of South Cork, "through this country runneth a goodly river called Bandon, wherein is great store of fishes of sundry sortes, especially samons, troutes, eels, and oft times seals."<sup>2</sup> Probably the River Bandon provided the seal which so strained the Customer's knowledge of Latin. There is not so much informaton on the methods of preserving the fish for transport. The bulk must have been salted, and that, if any, is the usual designation given. Some of the large varieties, hake and pike, when defined as *sicci*, must have been dried, in contrast to the smoked fish, mainly herrings. Perhaps a small quantity were occasionally carried alive in the hold of the ship—those said to be *humecii*, also usually hake and pike, unless the word was merely applied to salted fish in opposition to the term *sicci* with which it occurs.

The steadiness of the trade to Bristol is remarkable, though naturally it also suffered late in the century. A law suit in 1543 between the parishioners of Redcliffe and the mayor of Bristol, about his restrictions on their fairs gives an incidental illustration of the importance of Irish fish to the trades folk there. The plaintiffs related how the "men of Erlond, Wales, Cornwall and Densshere" used to resort to Bristol with their fish, which the citizens bought "for reytayell to serve the countre inhabitantes nere unto them, and by that meanes all byers within the countys of Gloucester, Somerset, Mon-

<sup>1</sup> Ib.      <sup>2</sup> Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, 1841, Vol. I, p. 1.

mouth, Dorset, Haffordwest, Worssiter, Warwyke, Shropesher and Wiltes," were supplied. It was further sworn that "such occupiers within the cite of Bristowe as have no other lyvinge but by byenge and sellynge of fishe and other commodities out of Erlond" would be ruined if the fair were discontinued and the produce sold direct.<sup>1</sup> The document is a naïve illustration of the profits obtainable by the middleman, but it is easier to sympathise with the plaintiffs after seeing that boat loads with fish only, worth from £10 to £60, were entered at Bristol each year as well as additional quantities in the mixed cargoes. The total import of fish at Bristol in 1504 amounted to the high value of £2,465 4s. 6d.<sup>2</sup> Some interesting particulars of the internal management are available, although most of them are of a monotonous character. The State Papers show many petitions for fishing rights in addition to that of Sir H. Gilbert, and Baltimore came in for a share of these; John Appleyard desired to "plant and inhabit there for the fishing traffic,"<sup>3</sup> and a party headed by Sir Warhame Sentleger wished for a patent to that whole coast.<sup>4</sup> The actual grants are recorded in numbers among the Patent and Close Rolls, and Fiants. Indeed it would be possible from them to trace the tenures of most of the fishings throughout the century, especially on the Rivers Shannon and Bann. Many of the Patents are without special interest, but some were granted to men whose names are familiar in the Custom's Accounts as exporters, others to local magnates distinguished in the records of their respective neighbouring towns. The great families of Lynch and Marten of Galway had licences for two<sup>5</sup> and three<sup>6</sup> nets on the Shannon at an average rent of 2/- per net per annum, and their patents constantly recur. The following lease to Roger Chaloner, usher of

<sup>1</sup> Selden Soc. Select Cases in the Star Chamber, Vol. II, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 122. <sup>3</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 197 (1562).

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 399 (1568).

<sup>5</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls Ire. Roll's Series, p. 33 (1535).

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* p. 5 (1533).

the King's Chamber, is not only an example of the general type, but gives details of the methods of fishing employed. He received "a water mill upon the water of Galway and the fishing of the waters of the rivers there, (except three places demised to Thomas Marten) with licence to fish and take all manner of fish of whatsoever kind within every place of the said river or water, with nets, weles, casting spears, set nets, and other instruments and engines necessary for the purpose. To hold for 40 years . . . at rent of 20/- sterling."<sup>1</sup> On the Bann "the entire fishery and taking of salmon and other fish" was granted for 41 years at the rent of £10.<sup>2</sup> There are apparent discrepancies in the rates charged, but they were adjusted in accordance with the probabilities of payment. In districts where there was little or no English control the crown was glad to receive even a nominal rent and the homage implied. In other instances a free grant or one on favourable terms was proved to be a useful reward. The total sum paid cannot have been large, for the Crown could not levy exclusive charges; but doubtless it was hoped that with the increase of power it would be possible to raise an appreciable revenue in that way.

Fish naturally had a share in the finances and provisions of municipalities. They were usually subject to tolls on passing the walls on the way to the markets, and considering the quantities shipped direct from the various ports, (e.g. Waterford) must have contributed generously to local rates. These tolls were adjusted to local conditions, but were otherwise fairly uniform; both Galway and Waterford charged 1/6 for every pipe of salmon, ¼d. for each salmon, 3¼d. for every mease of herrings. At Galway<sup>3</sup> the charges were 1d. for a cwt. of scalpin (whiting) or other fish, ½d. for 100 dried fish, and 2d. for a horseload of fish, which at Kilmallock<sup>4</sup> was

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls Ire. Roll's Series, p. 34 (1538).

<sup>2</sup> Ib. p. 12 (1534). <sup>3</sup> Ib. p. 196 (1550).

<sup>4</sup> Dep. Keeper Rec. Ire. Fiaants Eliz. Rep. 14 App. I, p. 71, no. 4574 (1584).

only 1*d.* At Waterford<sup>1</sup> they were 4*d.* for 100 hake, 1*d.* for a mease of scalpin, and 2*d.* for every 100 eels. Municipal officers were as much concerned with regulations for the sale of fish as they were with those relating to the other commodities. The following is an instance typical of the orders made in accordance with current Gild and Borough policy. In 1588 the Corporation of Dublin arranged a place on Cork Hill<sup>2</sup> where the free fishers of the city were compelled to "utter" their fish; in order to set up the new market they bestowed £4 10*s.* 0*d.* out of the city revenues for "boards and other necessities for furnishing same." Nevertheless, the free fishers settled in Fish Street were still at liberty to sell at their own standings, as long as they were not "thought hurtful to the market by the Mayor." Other fishers in the same street were forced to go to the shambles and unfree fishers were, as usual, compelled to sell below the free men in the market place.<sup>3</sup> Tithes on fish also led to complications, chiefly in the matter of boundaries. The convent of Christchurch had some difficulty in deciding the extent of its rights on the Liffey,<sup>4</sup> and in 1577 the Dean and Chapter of Holy Trinity had to present a bill to the Lord Chancellor for the recovery of their tithes, especially on herrings. Among the fishermen involved were Thomas Heiwarde of Malahide, Thomas Carre of Howth, and Patrick Managhan of Clontarfe. They pleaded that the "common custom of Ireland was to give half of such tithes to the parish church where the fish was landed and half where the fishers dwelt."<sup>5</sup> Decree, however, was given in favour of the complainants.

An Act of 1569 shows that the Irish Parliament was not unmindful of the care of rivers in the interests of

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS., Comm. Rep. 10 App. V, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> Above Dublin Castle.

<sup>3</sup> Minute Book of Corp. of Dublin (Friday Book) Proc. R.I.A., Vol. 30, Sec. C., p. 487, Dublin, 1912.

<sup>4</sup> Dep. Keeper Rec. Ire. Fiants, Rep 20, App. VII, p. 102 (1494).

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* p. 120.



fishing. It recites the "great hurt and hindrance" caused near rivers "that ebbe and flow and wherein the frye of salmon, ele and other commodious fishes are bred and nourished" by inhabitants of towns who allowed their herds to feed upon the strand, and so to destroy the spawn. From 5th March to the last day of September yearly "no swine, hogge or pigge" were to be allowed on such rivers, the penalty being the forfeiture of the animals.<sup>1</sup> But how far the Act was really effective is unknown. The close of the sixteenth century saw a decline in the Irish fisheries. This is considered by some not to have been due only to general conditions of trade depression, but partly to a natural movement of the best shoals of fish from the Irish to the Newfoundland banks. This may indeed be true, and certainly the close of the century witnessed the rise of the Newfoundland fisheries which seriously affected those of Ireland in the next century. A perusal of the Custom's Accounts for the Cornish towns soon reveals how the direct imports of Newfoundland fish gradually increase and cargoes of fish from Ireland are partially replaced by other commodities such as wood, though Bristol scarcely shows so much change. At this time, also, began Ireland's intermediary traffic with the colonies, an important factor in the trade of the seventeenth century, which is first evidenced in the transport of Newfoundland fish. As early as 1537 there entered Bristol

"The Mighell of Kynsale whereof John Colman is master . . . John Roche native, 4,000 of salt fish of the New land, value £30, 400 of boards £4, 1 tun of trane oil 46/8,<sup>2</sup> 2 pipeshogsheads of thornpole<sup>3</sup> 40/-. Total value £38 6s. 8d., subsidy 38/4.

"Martin Lubrin alien, 2,000 of salt fish of the

<sup>1</sup> Statutes at large passed in Ir. Parl. F. Vesey, Dub., 1786, 11, Eliz. Cap. 13, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Fish or whale oil.

<sup>3</sup> Apparently a type of porpoise found off the American and Newfoundland coasts.



New land £16 13s. 4d. . . . (and other goods similar to above).

"Edmund Mollege native, 1,000 salt fish of the New land £6 13s. 4d. . . . 40 yards of chekkars 13/4, 2 stone Irish wool 5/4" (and other goods).<sup>1</sup>

John Colman carried Irish commodities as well as the fish and thornpole which he was re-exporting, and which may have been brought to Ireland originally, either by some other Irish trader, or by a Newfoundlander. Two similar instances show that the above, if a rare, was not an isolated instance. Another Kinsale boat landed "400 pisci terre nove de la smalle sorte." Val. 20/- Sub. 1/-<sup>2</sup> at Padstow in 1557, and John Birmyngham of Dublin in "le sondaie of Dublin" brought to Chester in 1585 "one thousand and half of Newfoundland fishe, Val. £20."<sup>3</sup> After 1600 instances become more common, and by 1630 when the prospectus of the London Company was issued, the suitability of the north western Irish towns for traffic with Newfoundland was fully recognised and accordingly advertised.

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. .189

<sup>2</sup> Ib. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. 11.

## CHAPTER IV

### HIDES AND LEATHER

Hides formed the second staple export of Ireland, and this was natural owing to the fact that forests (of which contemporary accounts will be found in the chapter dealing with timber) covered great areas of the country. They all show that until the destruction caused by the Elizabethan wars and the cutting for smelting in the seventeenth century, the woods were magnificent and afforded ample breeding ground for many animals, including wolves. An English tract of 1436, "*The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*," enumerates various kinds of skins as being among the principal Irish commodities.

"And marterns gode, bene in here marchundye ;  
Hertys hides, and other hydes of venerye,  
Skynnes of oter, squerel and Irysh hare,  
Of shepe, lambe and fox, is here chaffare (merchandise)  
Felles of kydde, and conyes grete plente."<sup>1</sup>

But the verse applies equally well to the sixteenth century, for hides long retained their importance, and provided an industry only rivalled by that of fishing, and in some ways more vital to local prosperity. While the coastal fishing was almost cosmopolitan, the hunting of animals and consequently the profits from the sale of skins were monopolised by the inhabitants.

Nevertheless, the export history of fish and hides was closely connected. The foreign fishing fleets might buy but limited quantities of fish to supplement what they caught themselves, but they were anxious to

<sup>1</sup> *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, ed. Sir G. Warner, p. 34.

obtain salt hides, and so constituted a ready market. Gilbert's report has already been quoted, and Sir Anthony St. Leger's in 1543 is similar, except that he lays greater stress on the value of hides. He reiterates that on the north-west and west Englishmen came only to Galway and thus most of the trade was between rebels and foreigners. "And likewise from Limerick to Cork, the Spaniards and Bretons have the trade, as well of the fishing there, *as of buying their hides, which is the greatest merchandise of this land*, and furnish Irishmen upon the south coast of Munster with salt, iron, guns and powder. Which havens, if they were in your majesty's hands, it should not only be to your Realme's great profit, the fishing thereof, with the vent (sale) of the same hides, but also a great weakening of Irishmen."<sup>1</sup> The west of England merchant also condemns the "Frenche and Spaniarde and Skotte" for the arms "whiche they sell for the said salte hide," and further includes for "anny thinge ells that is nedefull for the warrs."<sup>2</sup> This traffic was naturally irritating to the English administration.

But apart from the sales to fishing fleets and transactions in the nature of gun-running, there is evidence of a considerable legitimate foreign trade, Continental merchants shipping from Ireland, and Irish merchants transporting abroad. Most information bearing on such traffic expressly names salted hides, and apart from fish they were the staple products demanded in exchange for wine and salt. The Acts of the Privy Council<sup>3</sup> contain the complaint of Mr. Anselin Savage, who sent his ship, the *Dolphin* (burden 350 tons) to Ireland under Antony Seleyia Jennas and his factor Fraunces Brysket. It was laden with sundry wares "which he intended to bartre for salt hides and such other goodes of the growthe of the Realme" which had already been bargained for "with certaine merchants of Drogheda, Dublyn and

<sup>1</sup> S.P. Hen. VIII., Vol. III., no. 446.

<sup>2</sup> S.P. Dom. Eliz., Vol. 255, no. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Acts of P.C. in Eng., 1542-7, p. 356 (1546).

other partes." The same authority records the order in 1551 to Dover officers "tenlarge a ship laded with salte hydes that cam out of Ireland, belonging to Christopher Dantesey and others."<sup>1</sup> On the French side there is similar evidence. Among the Rouen tolls of 1567 "Le cent de cuyer d'irelande" was charged 1/8,<sup>2</sup> and Francisque Michel states that Irish hides formed a part of the regular exchange with Bordeaux and cites the following:—"John Barry, marchand de la ville de Dingle, demeurant à Cork, reconnaît devoir à Etienne Burg, marchand de Bordeaux, trente-six cuirs de vache 'de saison de la grand' sorte' en échange de trois tonneaux de vin."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in the absence of regular returns many references to the traffic are like the last—instances of defaulting payment. Stephen Gaultier and Julian Golett of "St. Mallowes" applied for protection and licence to trade while they awaited the execution of their decree against several Limerick merchants for hides to the value of £299 5s. (English).<sup>4</sup> And the Repertory to Decrees (one of the few documents which survived the catastrophe of the Four Courts in 1922) shows the following similar litigation. On 26 May, 38 Henry VIII, William Delacluse of Flanders obtained judgment that Francis Portingall, Master of the Carvel "Sannita Maria de Conceptione," should fulfil his contract to convey certain hides and merchandise to Spain. On 14 May 3 Eliz., Peter Sterling of Antwerp was empowered to demand payment from John Money of Dublin for 250 weys of salt. He was to receive 491 harp testoons in money and 26 dickers and 6 lawful salt cow hides. The effect of the war with France is shown in a decree of 15 December, 1 Eliz., when certain Galway merchants, members of the famous Martin and Lynch

<sup>1</sup> Ib. 1550-2, p. 472.

<sup>2</sup> E. de Freville, *Mémoire sur le Commerce maritime de Rouen*, Vol. II, p. 461.

<sup>3</sup> Francisque Michel, *Histoire du commerce et de la Navigation à Bordeaux*, Vol. II, p. 376. (Instance quoted in note 2 from Acte de Denhors, 13 Feb., 1561).

<sup>4</sup> Keeper. Rec. Ire. Rep. XI, app. 3, Fiants. Eliz., p. 73, no. 403.

families were ordered to give up six lasts of cow hides, the goods of Nicholas Hallard, of Deepe in Normandy, an enemy of her Majesty. The legal traffic with Spain was often restricted at the end of the century, though the merchandise was usually transported there eventually. The following letter from Richard Graunte to Sir F. Walsingham in 1587 indicates the Waterford—Spanish fish and hide export:—"This last of October departed here hence our best three ships for Bayonne, in Galicia, and there hence were bound for Andulusia to lade wines; their lading here hence was frieze and hides; and now . . . are ready three small ships laden with dry hake, herrings and hides, bound for Bilboa in Biscay, to bring home yarn, and they were once stayed by my Lord Deputy, and are released again."<sup>1</sup>

As is the case with fish, the actual magnitude of the export to the Continent is unknown, it can only be conjectured from incidental evidence and from the proofs of anxiety displayed to get the whole traffic into English hands. But even this scattered evidence bears witness to one fact—that at least the Continental trade was widespread, and although Spain was the greatest customer, Irish hides were also to be found in quantities in the markets of France, the Netherlands and Italy. The casual information from litigation and State Papers is useful to supplement knowledge from the Anglo-Irish side; as there was always a demand for them abroad they were valuable for re-exportation. The west-country merchant speaks of the "greate store of salt hides" to be shipped from Ireland, which with the other merchandise was customarily sent "ether to Rochell or Newhaven and Roane, and sometimes into Flaunders." Later he expressly directs for the trade of Rochelle "fyne and course salte Irisshe hydes."<sup>2</sup> As well as such re-export they are to be found in the coastal trade of England, the more remote ports even as far north-east

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1586-8, p. 439.

<sup>2</sup> N. S. B. Gras, *Evolution of the English Corn Market*, p. 436.



as Lynn receiving consignments from nearer towns engaged in the direct traffic with Ireland, and sometimes even from foreign vessels. Thus Chichester records show no regular trade with Ireland, but contain frequent references to "Irisshe hydes," while there is the following instance of re-export from France. "In a ship of Deepe, John Osyer master, entered 15th day of March. From Nicholas Burden . . . and 7 panys of Irish lamb, value 23/4."<sup>1</sup> To understand this demand for hides it is necessary to realise their economic importance to the everyday life of the 16th century. They were far more valuable then than now, since furs and skins were more generally used for garments and trimmings, for coverings and rugs. In addition, till the second half of the century hides were essential writing materials, as the very vellum and coarse skin folios of the account books testify.

From the Custom's Accounts, however, it is possible to learn further of what the export to England actually consisted, and while the tables of statistics give the broader facts, there are also details of interest. Among all the skins obtainable in Ireland, pride of place was given to that of the marten, and according to a description of the year 1741 a "marten" was about the bigness of a cat having a long body and short legs, with a head and tail like a fox."<sup>2</sup> As the European counterpart of the Siberian sable, martens were highly valued and the gift of a few skins was considered a handsome present. The Accounts show the remarkable rise in their average value which took place during the century—from 1/- to 3/4 each. This change was due to two reasons, the general rise in prices and the increasing rarity of the animals. The latter statement may not at first sight seem borne out by the accounts, as some of the

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 292 Chichester, 1529-30. Also "John Hilles for six dozen Irish hides, value £6," and later for "three dozen Irish hides, value 60/-" etc.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in the New Oxford dictionary.

early books, for instance that for 1492 only shows 26 at 1/- each sent to Bristol,<sup>1</sup> which contrasts with 109 for £18 3s. 4d. in 1558<sup>2</sup> or even with 23 for £3 6s. 8d. in a spoiled ledger for six months of the year 1556-7.<sup>3</sup> But there is an almost total absence of marten skins in the late century books, e.g. six months of 1591 gives 33 otter and marten, not even classing them separately.<sup>4</sup> What unfortunately happened was that the high prices given in the middle of the century encouraged increased export and the species was practically hunted down. Like other animals they suffered in the devastation of the Munster woods, so that by the middle of the seventeenth century they were virtually exterminated, although an occasional specimen has been accidentally caught even as late as the year 1922 (e.g. by the writer's cousin at Longueville, Mallow, Co. Cork).

Otter may be ranked in importance next to marten. If the salmon and trout suffered from the depredations of the guzzling pike, all three were a prey for the "thick-coated otters," the "booty bringers" which abounded in the Munster rivers. Though less rare than marten they also show a similar rise in price—from 5d. to 2/- each, the greatest quantities likewise being exported in the middle of the century. Thus 234, value £23 7s. 0d., were sent to Bristol in 1558-9,<sup>5</sup> and from Youghal alone, to Bridgewater 90 in 1560.<sup>6</sup> The first figure compares with an average export of under a hundred for earlier years. The high value then set on otter skins—for 2/- (approximately equivalent to 30/- in modern money) seems rather curious, considering their comparatively low worth in modern times. It is easy to realise the esteem for marten, seeing their rarity, but not so simple to understand why otter skins should then have fetched nearly as high a price, since they were both common and plentiful. Moreover their destruction was in the nature of a benefit to the fishing and did not result in any

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{20}{9}$ .  
<sup>4</sup> K.R.P.B.  $\frac{11\frac{2}{3}}{1}$ .

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{2\frac{4}{5}}{5}$ .  
<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{2\frac{4}{5}}{8}$ .

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{3\frac{4}{5}}{15}$ .  
<sup>6</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{3\frac{2}{3}}{11}$ .

extinction of the species, for although the numbers exported diminish at the end of the century, still, (unlike, marten) a sufficiency remained amply to stock the rivers of to-day.

If any proof were needed of the necessity for wolf-dogs in Ireland in the sixteenth and earlier centuries it is to be found in the number of wolf skins exported. Some of the figures obtainable from the Account Books are remarkable. The Bristol accounts show an average of from 100 to 300 skins landed there alone, while in the year 1558-9 the high figure of 961, value £32 1s. 4d., is reached.<sup>1</sup> Like otter and marten they show a four-fold rise in price, from 1½d. in 1492<sup>2</sup> to 8d. each in 1553 and onwards.<sup>3</sup> The numbers for export also fall off at the close of the century, partly owing to the destruction of large areas of the Munster woods, where they were mainly caught, and partly to the general trade depression towards the end of the Tudor period. This depression most affected the population and trade of districts round Cork, Youghal, Waterford and Ross, the greatest centres for the distribution of wild animal and especially of wolf skins.<sup>4</sup>

Next to wolves in importance may be placed the fells of several kinds of deer, the "other of venerye" of the political tract and which included stag (*cervus*), hart, buck, roe, fawn and doe (*dama*). The sixteenth century stags were but insignificant descendants of the enormous Irish elk which once roamed the primeval forest; nevertheless their hides were no despicable item of trade. The term deer or "deare" was sometimes used to cover all varieties of the species, but most often implying stag skins, which were rated for the greater part of the century at 4d. each, rising to 10d. after about 1580.<sup>5</sup> Where hart are entered separately they are estimated higher. An Ilfracombe book for 1557 shows two dickers of hart

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 24.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 20.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 24.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. in K.R.C.A. 24 Bristol, 1558. Cork boats contributed 321, Youghal 160, Waterford 149 and Ross 101 wolf skins, at 8d. each.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A. 11 Chester, 1585, 72 "dear fells," value 10d. each.

hides from Youghal value at £1, i.e. 1/- per hide,<sup>1</sup> but they were more often included in the classification of deer skins. Deer skins in general seem to have been exported in the greatest numbers about 1585. Thus a Chester account for three months of that year records 3,201 transported from Dublin,<sup>2</sup> in contrast to 72 sent to Bristol in 1558,<sup>3</sup> and this despite the efforts to encourage effective tanning centres in Ireland after 1542. All kinds of deer skins were easily marketable products in the sixteenth century owing to the value of their hides for tanning purposes, rather than for their fur, but the best were the supple fells of fawn and doe. Fawn are seldom mentioned apart from deer, but appear to have been priced at about 2/- each as their inclusion drives up the average valuation.<sup>4</sup> Doe are rarely recorded at all, and then in small numbers, but the year 1492 shows seven imported at Bristol for £1 3s. 4d., i.e. 3/4 each, a high figure for such an early date.<sup>5</sup> Later books do not name them; perhaps they ceased to be exported, or were sent in still smaller numbers and not separately recorded.

Rabbit skins may compare very humbly as regards value and size with those already dealt with, but their numbers were not so insignificant. Moreover, the quantities exported increased during the course of the century, rising from an average of one, to two or three thousand per annum, sent to Bristol,<sup>6</sup> and attaining the figure of 45,000 at London in 1588.<sup>7</sup> Considering the abundance of rabbits or "conies" and the ease with which they could be caught, the value of the skins was high—they were estimated at 2/6 to 5/- per hundred (about ¼d. each). This compares quite favourably with

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. ¼d.      <sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. ¼d.      <sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 2½.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A., Bristol, 1492. e.g. 50 deer and fawn £6 5s. 0d.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>6</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 2½, 1553, 800 for £1 0s. 0d. K.R.C.A. 2½, 1558, 2,186 for £2 5s. 1d. K.R.C.A. 2½, 1590, May and June only, 3,900 from Youghal.

<sup>7</sup> Entry from K.R.P.B. ½, quoted at end of chapter.



modern times, especially as the sixteenth century furriers had not the present day skill in the dyeing and counterfeiting of rabbit to resemble rarer, or imaginary kinds of fur. It was hard for the *pelles cunicularum* to pass as anything else. Occasionally an entry can be seen for black cony skins worth three or four times the amount of the grey, but they were extremely uncommon.

The *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye* enumerates "skynnes" of fox, squirrel and hare among the merchandise of Ireland. Possibly foxes were more plentiful at the date of the poem, although at most ports in the sixteenth century their skins are not mentioned at all. That they were really exported, however, is proved by two Bridgewater books, the first showing 80 imported from Youghal in 1557,<sup>1</sup> and the second 169, again all from Youghal in 1560,<sup>2</sup> but no distinct value is given. Penryn also contains the following entry of "5 fox cassis [skins] 2 otter's cassis and 3 deare hides" value 6/8, in a book for 1557.<sup>3</sup> If fox skins are actually recorded in the Accounts, the same cannot be said for "squerel and Irish hare." Indeed there seems to have been some misconception about the existence of squirrels in Ireland, for they are not mentioned in the Accounts and are considered to have been introduced into Ireland at a later date than the sixteenth century. The truth seems to be that the author of the *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye* made a mistake in nomenclature and confused squirrels with pine-marten—a natural error, as they are very similar in appearance and both possess bushy tails—but the latter are more indigenous to the country and are still occasionally to be found in the west of Ireland. But even such an erroneous inclusion is interesting, for it implies the use, and possibly the export, of pine-marten, if not of squirrel skins. This list of the wild skins may be included, however, with the almost unique item of three wild dogskins found imported at Bridgewater, from Youghal, in 1560.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 28. <sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 39. <sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 117. <sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 39.



Among the skins of domestic animals the principal were those of sheep and lamb—the woodfells proper—but they will be dealt with later as belonging more accurately to the chapter on wool. Of the others, kid and goat were the most numerous, sent especially to Bristol early in the century before the export of woodfells became of overwhelming importance. Also it is possible that the efforts to encourage efficient tanning centres in Ireland, in the second half of the century, may have resulted in kid skins, at any rate, being kept more often in the country. Certainly judging from the Custom's Accounts their export was more general during the first quarter of the century. Thus the Bristol books for 1518, etc., contain entries for *pelles caprarum* and *pelles hedorum* (in true Cockney style more often spelt *edorum*!), or "kiddes," in every second merchant's bill of lading,<sup>1</sup> while the later books often show a total of only a few hundred.<sup>2</sup> Even when allowance has been made for the natural fluctuations in the items of export from year to year, the change in the quantities of goat and kid skins entered in the books before 1525 and those after 1550 is rather noteworthy. Unlike otter, etc., they did not more than double in value during the century. Compared even with rabbit skins they are estimated surprisingly low, for goat are valued at 15/- per hundred, i.e. barely 2*d.* each, and kid at 5/- and up to 10/- the hundred.

Cow and calf hides are known to have been exported from Ireland in considerable quantities, but curiously enough they are seldom entered by name in the accounts, although frequently referred to in the foreign papers. Cow must have formed the bulk of those unspecified entries for salt skins (*corria salsorum*), which are numerous and highly priced, ranging from 13/4 up to £3 6*s.* 8*d.* per dicker of ten skins at the close of the century. As few

<sup>1</sup> e.g. a few boat loads from the K.R.C.A. 1518-19, show 2,650 kidskins value £6 7*s.* 6*d.*, and 250 goat skins value £1 12*s.* 6*d.*

<sup>2</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 1553, 200 from Waterford, 10/-; K.R.C.A. 1558, 700 value £1 15*s.* 0*d.*

other skins would have given such a high valuation it seems probable that most dickers were composed of cow and calf.<sup>1</sup> A Poole account, however, under date 15th January, 1504, has two rough cow hides sent from Youghal at 3/- each,<sup>2</sup> and the port books for the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries contain many similar references.<sup>3</sup> As by that time the bills of lading—where they are at all explicit—refer less often to the dickers of unspecified skins, and more often expressly to cow hides, it is permissible to conclude that the change was one rather of terms than of facts. Calf or *vitulinum* are more generally named, usually with the designation *non tannatum* early in the period. The note *non tannatum* was consistently added to explain the low valuation, for while tanned calf skins averaged 1/8 each,<sup>4</sup> they were as little as 5/- the hundred untanned.<sup>5</sup> Their export was maintained fairly regularly, for if one or two early accounts show under the hundred imported in some years at various ports, and others over the thousand, the same fluctuations are to be found in later records.

The importance of the quantities of unspecified salt skins has already been touched upon. At the Cornish ports especially, they are frequently entered, whereas there are few otter, marten, etc., mentioned. Considering the size of Ilfracombe, Penryn and Barnstaple in those days it is surprising to read the numbers of dickers sent there from the Munster towns. For example, at Barnstaple, under date 29th of June, 1590, there is the following entry: "In the Prudence of Bedyford burden 12 tons, Christofer Boole master from Cork. George Stopford of Bedyford, Inglishe merchant for . . . 10 dicars of hides," value £33 5s. 0d. (Sub. 33/3)—quite a good consignment considering the time and

<sup>1</sup> Except where the term "wild skins" is used as in K.R.C.A. 20, Bristol, 1492, which records 4½ dickers of *wild skins*, value £2 6s. 8d.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 10.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.P.B. 22 Poole and Weymouth, 1607, 53 cow hides from Carrickfergus.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 20 Bristol, 1492.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A. 12 Bristol, 1518.

the place.<sup>1</sup> Hides and skins which were totally uncured were transported in the salted state, but as with fish, they might be either lightly or heavily salted. Towards the end of the century the further descriptions "wette salte," "frishe salte" and "drye salte" are given, the "drye" hides being the more valuable.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes there is the designation "rawe" or "roughe," probably applied to hides quite unwrought, but it does not often occur, and after 1569 there was an additional duty imposed on hides exported in the rough.<sup>3</sup> Salt hides are again occasionally defined as *tannata* and *non tannata*. The position of the tanning industry in Ireland is considered at the end of this chapter, and on the whole salt hides *non tannata* are less generally found late in the period. The following extracts are chosen from some of the most interesting bills of lading as illustrative of the foregoing remarks on the hide trade.

"Boat called the Magdalen of Waterford, of which William Pembroke is Master, came from Ireland 25th day of June and has in the same . . . William Artheppoll native, 100 calveskins, value £1 5s. 10d. sub. 1/3<sup>4</sup> . . . William Stempe native, for 5½ dickers of salt skins, value £3 13s. 4d., sub. 3/8. 4 dickers of wild animals value 10/-, sub. 6d. 100 rabbit skins, value 5/-, sub. 3d. 7 marten skins, value 7/-, sub. 4½d. 35 wolf skins, value 4/4, sub. 2½d. 100 yards cheks, value £2, sub. 2/-," and similarly for other merchants.<sup>5</sup>

"Boat called the Sea of Wercombe of which Henry Wise is Master, came from Ireland the same day of June. Thomas Jordan native, for 7 dickers salt skins value £4 13s. 4d., 1450 sheep skins value £7 5s. 0d., 600 untanned calf skins value £1 10s. 0d., 200 goat skins value £1 10s. 0d., 350 kid skins value 17/6," and other goods

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 48.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 11 Chester, 1585, where "8 dicker of wette salte hydes" are valued at £8 and "4 dicker drye" at £10.

<sup>3</sup> See note to p. 109.

<sup>4</sup> As the calve skins are not specified *non tannata* they were at least partly cured. This accounts for their high value.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A. 112, Bristol, 1504-05.

to the total value of £22 os. 5*d.* and similarly for other merchants.<sup>1</sup>

The following mid-century example is interesting as showing that Limerick merchants sometimes sent their goods via Waterford. "In the Sondag of Waterford of the burden of 16 tons, John Purser of the same, master from Waterford for Bristol. Nicholas Wolf of Lymbrick in Ireland native merchant for 300 linen cloths, £3. 12 marten skins, £2. 6 otter skins, 12/-. 200 sheepfells, £1 6s. 8*d.* Value £6 18s. 6*d.* Subsidy 6/11" . . . and so for the rest of cargo to total value of £43 17s. 8*d.* and subsidy of one-twentieth, i.e. £2 3s. 11*d.*<sup>2</sup> "The firste daie of December 1585. In the William of Chester burden 20 tonnes the master Robert Ratcliffe from Dublin. Wylliam Dowdy of Dublin 3 packes containing 1,400 and a half brookefells, 900 shepefells, . . . 14 dearefells . . . etc. George Roche of Dublin one packe containing 500 shepefells, 200 brookefells . . . Sylvester Mascall of Dublin one fardell containing 400 black lambe skynnes, 400 brookefells, half hundred conye skynnes and one dossen lynge valued at 53/4. Custom is 2/8 exoneratam per cartam,"<sup>3</sup> etc., etc.

With regard to the distribution of the export of hides there are only a few general distinctions to be made. As was natural from the state of the country the Munster towns supplied the majority of wild animal skins, especially wolf, otter and marten, and they were sent principally to Bristol and Bridgewater. The Cornish ports seldom record them, and appear to have preferred the unspecified dickers (i.e. probably cow and calf). From Dublin and Drogheda and later Carrickfergus came most of the fells of domestic animals, and indeed by the end of the century few of any other variety. Their trade was largely limited to Bristol and Chester. The terms used in counting were last and dicker. A last contained 20 dickers, and a dicker about 10 skins, so

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 132, Bristol, 1518.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 24, Bristol, 1556.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 31, Chester, 1585.



that a last averaged 200 skins. Almost the only available return for Dublin Customs (and that a summary) is for the year 1505-6, when 84 lasts, four "dakers," paid duty of £84 14s. 6d., and 36 lasts, 19 "dakers," paid £26 19s. 0d.<sup>1</sup> Thus for 24,230 skins the Crown received £111 13s. 6d.—a fair sum of money in those days.

Hides, like fish, must have contributed largely to Corporation rates, and the tolls are interesting as throwing light on contemporary costs of marketing. At Waterford every dicker of unspecified skins was charged 6d., of stags 3d.; every hundred of kidfell 1½d., of goat 4d. of rabbit and hare 1½d., of calf 2d., of fox 4d.; and every dozen of marten 1d. and otter 1½d.<sup>2</sup> Galway tolls are not so detailed; every single hide was charged ½d., all worth 1/- were charged 1d., but some other skins (not specified) worth 1/- were rated at 4d., and every 100 rabbit skins at 2d.<sup>3</sup>

The most vitally connected subject is that of tanning, and a consideration of the position of that industry is important. The native Irish were in early times well acquainted with the art of curing—witness their leather caps and shoes—but the industry later does not seem to have kept pace with the developments in other countries. Bristol books for 1518, etc., show hides *tannata* and *pelles aurei*, i.e. golden or prepared skins sent to Ireland, also "rede leshe," or cordwain for cushions and red and white "ledder," evidence of dependence on importation for the higher grades of leather work.<sup>4</sup> The Waterford Customs had special charges for tanned skins and the fact that they are placed with the foreign merchandise implies the section to which they generally belonged at the date of the charter. (Late fifteenth century.) "Every dossen tawed caulff skynnes" paid 6d., deer 1/6; every 100 sheep 1/4 and goat 3/—rates which contrast with those for

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Vol. I, p. 144, note a. (from Pipe Rolls).

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 10 app. V., p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Vol. I, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 122.

the same goods untanned.<sup>1</sup> However, the lower grades of leather work for home consumption were done in the country, although early in the century there was little curing for export. The majority of hides were exported in the salted state owing to its convenience, and before about 1570 the alternative designation to *salsa* (when any is given) is *non tannata*. After 1570 the descriptions "stage" (i.e. probably dried), "seasoned" (matured or fit for use), and *tannata* are to be found, while a Chester entry for 1585 even has an express instance of five dickers of *leather* sent from *Dublin* at £6 13s. 4d. each dicker.<sup>2</sup> As early as 1542 an effort was made to encourage the better qualities of tanning. The Act for Gray merchants which forbade the purchase of hides, yarn, checks, etc., by traders going from town to town out of market time had a clause exempting "any tanner or barker within this realm, for the buying of any hides to be tanned or barked, so that he doe tanne or barke the same."<sup>3</sup> In 1567 Peter Back of Brabant noted the opportunities which existed in Ireland and asked for a licence to convert stag's, kid's, goat's and calve's skins into morocco leather there.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps his petition drew Elizabeth's attention to the possibility of raising a revenue on leather, and may have been partly responsible for the legislation of 1569 which marked definite efforts to set the industry on a better footing. An Act limited the places where tanning might take place to those licensed by the Lord Deputy and Council. Though the preamble gives the philanthropic reason "because hides had before been corruptly and fallaciously dressed, and might now be made good and merchantable,"<sup>5</sup> the chance of raising

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 10, app. 5, p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Stats. in Ire.* F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 33. Hen. VIII, cap. II, p. 178, statute perpetuated 11 Eliz. cap. V, p. 319.

<sup>4</sup> C. S.P. Ire. 1509-73, p. 388.

<sup>5</sup> *Stat. in Ire.* F. Vesey, Vol. I, 11 Eliz., p. 316. Further effect was given to the order by part of another statute which imposed additional customs on the export of "unwrought" hides (amongst other raw

a tax similar to that in England was probably Elizabeth's chief motive. Among the deputies "remembrances for Ireland" is one "to procure an order for the marking and sealing of tanned leather in Ireland as it is used in England, *for her Majesty is to receyve* a yearly commodity thereby."<sup>1</sup> After legislation she sent to Sir H. Sydney "a noate of the execucion of the lawe for marking of leather within our cite of London whereby you maye cause the lyke to be done there."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, overseers were appointed in the various counties to search the hides and leather tanned, with power to seize that done imperfectly, or in any unlicensed place. They received half the value of forfeitures, and no leather was to be sold until examined and sealed with a broad arrow head. For each hide so sealed *1d.* was paid, half going to the Crown and half to the searcher.<sup>3</sup>

The principal towns were authorised as tanning centres under the Statute, but some of their additional licenses are of interest. In 1576 the guild of shoemakers and "every member of that fraternity" in Waterford were permitted to tan hides and leather in the city and liberties, provided that they gave sufficient surety not to produce any work not duly finished, and to offer it at reasonable rates. The necessity for this grant was due to the fact that the number of tanners was not sufficient to supply the demand, and before the Act the shoe-makers had also tanned.<sup>4</sup> Considering the large export of hides from Waterford this is easily believable. In Cork they were similarly privileged "to tan, curry, and dress hides and leather, except sheepfell and deer-

materials). The charges were *4d.* on every "unwrought" sheepfell, calfell and goatfell;  $\frac{2}{6}$  on each red deerfell, and  $\frac{1}{8}$  on each fallow deerfell—p. 349. The increase in hides tanned may be judged by another act of the same year (p. 343) which penalises the unpleasant habit of leaving hides with lime bound up in them in running water—a practise which killed fish and corrupted the streams for human use.

<sup>1</sup> S.P. Ire. Eliz. Vol. 30, no. 103.

<sup>2</sup> R.I. Acad. Hal. Coll. Mem. Rolls. Ire. Extracts 1383-1643, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> The Fiants give some of these appointments, see Dep. Keeper Rec. in Ire. Rep. 12, app. V, pp. 88, 89 and 140.

<sup>4</sup> Dep. Keeper Rec. in Ire. Rep. 12, app. V, p. 174.

fell," but for a different reason—because there were no regular tanners or curriers in the city and they had always undertaken it before.<sup>1</sup> Work, however, must have been plentiful, since in the following year (1578) the glovers were authorised "to dress horse hides, dearfell, faunfell, kidfell, sheepfell and lambfell."<sup>2</sup> Again in Limerick the shoemakers were licensed to tan "as well for the maintenance of their trade as for the benefit of their neighbours and town dwellers, the commodity of foreigners and specially the multitude of the country people who are destitute of places to resort unto where to have leather for their necessary uses."<sup>3</sup>

The regulations were not implicitly obeyed, to judge from the following breach, when Roger Fynglas of Porterston gave information against Robert Blakeney of Sawcerston, Co. Dublin, that from day to day he "hath, and doth tan twentye payr cowe hyds, every hyde worth thre shillings starlinge, ten thre quarter cowe hyds every of them worth seaven grots starlinge fyve half hyds, every of them worthe foure grots starlinge."<sup>4</sup> And when Roger Longe and William Chaderton were made overseers in 1582 it was complained that the Statute had long been neglected."<sup>5</sup> One very human incident is recorded of a private license. William England of Kilcock (Co. Kildare) had his patent renewed because his former one had been burnt by accident. It contained permission to erect a house for tanning all kinds of leather, and selling same during his lifetime as well as permission to brew and sell *aqua vitae*.<sup>6</sup>

It is impossible to estimate how far the inconvenience of the restrictions were compensated for by the benefits produced by the Statute. The industry may have developed in spite of, and not because of, overseers ;

<sup>1</sup> Ib. Rep. 13, app. IV, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. Rep. 13, app. V, p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. II, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> R.I. Acad. Hal. Coll. Mem. Rolls. Ire. Extracts, 1383-1643, p. 347.

<sup>5</sup> Keeper Recs in Ire. Rep. 13, App. IV, p. 301, no. 4118.

<sup>6</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. II, p. 337 (1595).



but undoubtedly tanning did progress during the century—perhaps owing to the example of certain Flemish families as much as to anything else. Sir Henry Sydney gave the old town of Swords to forty of these families who sought a refuge from the persecution of their reformed faith in the Low Countries. Writing in 1583 he bore witness to their diligence: "They made . . . excellent good leather of deer skins, goat and sheepfells, as is made in Southwark."<sup>1</sup> The following extract from a late London account shows some skins "seasoned" as opposed to those "stage," but from the high total value it is probable that the rest were also tanned or at least partially cured. The entry has additional interest because instances of direct export from Ireland to London are not easy to find.

"Decimo Septimo Julii. 1588.

"De le Jesus de Waterford, 40 dollia (tons) Robert Conway magister ab ibidem. De Symon Strange de Waterford pro 90 fardellis continentes, 2,250 morkyns, 20,000 grey conny skynnes seasoned, 25,000 grey conny skynnes stage, 100 of deer hides and fawne skynnes, 1,100 yerdes of Iryshe freese, 30 Irish rouges [rugs], 12 Irish mantelles, 24 half mantelles, 21 otter skynnes, 2 dozen flox skynnes. Valorem £214 2s. 0d. Subsidium £10 14s. 1d."<sup>2</sup>

So far as natural facilities were concerned, tanning should have been, and have remained, one of Ireland's premier industries. That important factor—an abundance of oak bark for the production of tannin—existed in her forests, but with the misfortune which attends Irish economic history that advantage was swept away in the vicissitudes of the next century. If English mercantile interests had been as willing to prevent the export and use of Irish wood as they were that of woollen cloth, the necessary timber would have remained. As it was, war and devastation, export of

<sup>1</sup> C. Car. MSS., II, p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.P.B. §.

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boards, and above all, the cutting of the forests for smelting iron in the seventeenth century, combined to produce an irrevocable decline in the industry. By 1719 iron works had so depleted Ireland of oak trees that there were not enough to supply the bark for tanning.

## CHAPTER V

### WOOL AND LINEN

" Their shirtes be verie straunge, not reachyng past the thie ;  
With pleates on pleates they pleated are as thick as pleates may lye,  
Whose sleeves hang trailing downe almost unto the shoe,  
And with a mantell commonlie the Irish kerne doe goe."  
(J. Derrick, *Image of Ireland*, Lord Somer's Tracts, p. 586).

#### (I) WOOL

ANOTHER division of exports may be classified as that of woollen cloth, made up goods, wool, flocks,<sup>1</sup> and sheep and lambskins or the woolfells proper. The controversies of the succeeding century over the woollen trade have tended to obscure the position which it held in the sixteenth, but it was one of undoubted importance, though changing in character at the end of the period. This alteration was due to the increased proportion of raw materials, especially woolfells, exported as compared with the quantities of cloth. It is demonstrated in the Accounts, but the danger of decay in the cloth industry was early recognised by the Irish Parliament and in 1522 an Act was passed against the " lading of wool and flocks out of this land." The preamble explains that the export caused " the dearth of cloth, and idleness of many folkes, so that in default of labour and occupation of the same divers persons, both men and women, have faln to theft and other misgovernance, to the desolation and ruine of this poor land." A penalty was imposed of double the value of the forbidden goods with the customary division of half to the King and the other half to " him that will sue therefore."<sup>2</sup> But the measure

<sup>1</sup> Inferior wool.

<sup>2</sup> *Stat. in Ir. Parl.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 61. (13 Henry VIII, cap. 2).

was evaded as there was no authority given to make seizure of the goods, and it was possible to obtain licenses, some of which are to be found in the Patent Rolls. For instance, in 1534 John Travers, a gentleman waiter to the Duke of Richmond, was allowed to send within seven years to West Chester, Liverpool or Bristol, 33 sacks of Irish wool, each sack containing 26 stone 1 pound (nearly 860 stones), "to sell to his best profit and advantage."<sup>1</sup> And in 1536 John Forster was licensed to export to England 200 stone of wool annually for six years.<sup>2</sup> The tendency shown in such grants moved the Irish Parliament to re-enact the measures of 1522 in 1537 with more stringent provisions. Authority was given for entry and seizure of the goods, and all licenses contrary to the meaning of the statute were declared "cleerly voyd and of none effect" whether past, present or future, or granted by the King or his deputies. Yet even this sweeping resolution was qualified in the fifth clause, which permitted the patent of Edward Abecke of Manchester (to take £40 worth of wool and flocks yearly to England) to stand.<sup>3</sup> The system of licenses was injurious, hindering efforts to improve native industry and draining the country of valuable raw resources, but fortunately as far as wool was concerned the evil was fairly well recognised and on the whole few licenses were given, although they were too lucrative to the grantor for it to be possible to restrict them entirely. Yet even the Queen's instructions to Sir Anthony St. Leger, Deputy and Council in 1550 advised the keeping of wool and other commodities within the realm, as part of the commonwealth of the people "any license heretofore granted for the export of wools notwithstanding."<sup>4</sup> Probably this care furthered the developments in the cloth industry.

Two later statutes (1569 and 1571) are dealt with

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Stat. in Ir. Parls.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, pp. 132-5. (28 Hen. VIII, 17).

<sup>4</sup> C. Car. MSS., I, p. 288.



elsewhere, but their particular application must be mentioned here. The first aimed at encouraging the making of cloth, (among other manufactures) and was in part a repetition of the Act of 1522. Heavy Customs were imposed on the export of raw materials (wool, flocks and linen yarn), with one interesting exception.<sup>1</sup> Lords, prelates and counsellors were allowed to take flock beds under three stone weight with them for the passage, duty free. It was customary for people of birth then, to carry their own comfortable bedding with them on all occasions, whether travelling or going to battle, as the ballad of Sir Patrick Spens relates.

“ And mony were the feather beds  
That flattered on the faem,  
And mony were the good Scots lords,  
That never mair cam hame.”

The fact that local industry was quite efficient is indicated by the second statute, when the merchant staplers and merchants of the privileged towns obtained a monopoly for the transport of the “wrought” goods similar to the one which they claimed to have practically enjoyed of the “unwrought” before. In accordance with the individualistic economic theory of the age they disliked the equal opportunity which the Act of 1569 gave “to all men, French, Scottish, Spanish as other nations, foreine and straungers” to take the commodities away.<sup>2</sup> But the important fact is the implied abundance of “wrought” goods, including woollen and linen cloth. Nevertheless, at the end of the century the demand for raw material, both in England and on the Continent, became too strong for the influence of Customs or Legislation, in a country depressed by war. Foreign

<sup>1</sup> *Stat. in Ir. Parl.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 349. (11 Eliz.). These customs were, to the Queen, on every stone of wool and flocks 5/-, on every pound of flax, linen and woollen yarn 1/-, and to the town whence they were transported 4/- and 8d. respectively.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 13 Eliz., p. 376.

manufacturers were anxious to supplement their stores, even with the coarser grades from Ireland and hence the export of woolfells and wool increased considerably. A grant of 1595 is illustrative of this, and of the continued difficulty experienced in preventing the issue of licenses. Nicholas Weston obtained a monopoly from the Queen for the export of sheep skins, wool and tallow from Dublin and Drogheda for four years, up to the amount of 300 packs containing each 400 sheep skins (total 120,000), 300 packs of wool (40 stone in each, total 12,000), and 50 stones of tallow, which he was allowed to send to any ports beyond the seas free from the Customs, cf. statutes 11 and 13 Eliz.<sup>1</sup> In the next century the representatives of English mercantile interests not only disliked the competition of Irish cloth, but also the fact that yarn was supplied to the Continent. They therefore created the monopoly in the export of Irish wool which so adversely affected the Irish woollen trade.

Apart, however, from general policy the Custom's Accounts supply material of interest about the actual industry and traffic. The staple woollen material was a coarse frieze of which there were several varieties, Cheks being the principal, Chekkers, Whitelles (light-coloured) and Ray-cloth (striped). Cheks are often mentioned separately,<sup>2</sup> especially during the first half of the century, and the making of Whitelles and Ray-cloth would seem to have been confined to this early period, though even then only exported in small quantities—5 to 15 yards at a time. Early Bridgewater books also contain entries for "*regardus Hiberniae*,"<sup>3</sup> possibly cloth which had been specially passed or examined, and judging from the similarity in value ( $4\frac{1}{2}d.$  a yard) probably another kind of frieze. Most descriptions do not specify the varieties in detail, although all the terms are used in the Custom's Accounts, and undoubtedly

<sup>1</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs in Ire. Fiant. Rep. 17, App. 4, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> 4,172 yards of Cheks were imported at Bristol, 1492-3, K.R.C.A. 28.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 211 etc.

the great bulk of material exported was the ordinary frieze. At Bristol during the year 1559-60, 26,556 yards of Irish frieze were imported and only 378 yards of Cheks and 40 yards of Chekkers.<sup>1</sup> These figures may be taken as an indication of the general proportion, but the values of all varieties are closely related, ranging through the century from £1 13s. 4d. to £4 os. 0d. the hundred yards. (About 4½d. to 9½d. per yard.)

Up to 1550 no other woollen stuff was exported, but after that date some further kinds appear, and their development may have been influenced by attempts, of which at least two were recorded, to introduce the making of new fabrics. About 1525 Pierce Butler, second Earl of Ormond, and his wife, "planted great civility in the county of Tipperary and Kilkenny" by bringing Flemish artificers (then the most skilled workmen in Europe) to Kilkenny Castle, where they set the people a good example making "diapers, tappestries, Turkey carpets, cushions, and other like works."<sup>2</sup> The other effort is revealed under a license. In 1559 John Parker, Master of the Rolls, was licensed to buy in Ireland, for eight months, 500 stone of wool and to send the same from the havens of Carlingford, Dundalk, Drogheda, Skerries, Malahyde, Howthe, Blocke, Dalkie, Wicklow, Arklow, Wexford, Waterford, or Ross, to England or elsewhere. The "consyderatyon" was that "Johan Parker hath set up within this realm as well tappyssery making as hattes to ye benefyte and comodyte of this cuntrie; to ye doing of whych he must have out of England and Flaunders as well colored wooll and cruell as other things necessary for those mysteryes, whych he ys not able to bye by reason of ye extreme loss in ye exchange of ye money; for ye help of whych and inhabling hym to procede in hys honest enterpryce thys

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 24. Probably some of the cloth entered as freize really belonged to one of the subdivisions.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. App. to second Rep., pp. 224-5 (MSS. of O'Connor Don).

lycens ys graunted.”<sup>1</sup> The accounts do show that hats were sometimes sent to England, so that Parker’s endeavours were not quite fruitless, but carpets and tapestry are not mentioned. Irish wool was coarse and there was little choice in the dyes, and therefore the manufacture of the more elaborate fabrics was dependent on the importation of some material, a necessity which militated against success, owing to the state of Elizabeth’s Irish currency. The example may nevertheless have furthered the subsequent developments which were more suited to the resources at hand. After 1560 the early varieties of frieze are no longer described, but the accounts show the gradual appearance of new goods—cadowes or coarse coverings, flannell, blankets, blanketing, and coverlets. These were sent to Chester and in a lesser degree to Bristol, while the first named were also popular in Cornwall, perhaps because they were the cheapest (about 2/6 each). For instance at Ilfracombe, under the date 1st September, 1591, was recorded “The Luke of Ilfercombe, burden 16 tons, William Myller merchant from Waterford. John Beare of Hunshan merchant for fortie course cadowes, value £5, subsidy 5/-.”<sup>2</sup> When coloured they were priced at from 13/- to 18/-.

The cloth, famous as “Waterford rugg,” though also made throughout the South, was, however, more prized. Its evolution was certainly a reward for the early care taken in that city. A corporation statute of 1516 forbade any wool being sent abroad and this local determination reinforced by general legislation (even if often evaded), kept a supply of yarn in Waterford which favoured the production of a new style of frieze. According to Dymmok Irish sheep were small, but with a long, coarse fleece peculiarly suited for the making of rug,<sup>3</sup> and this statement is confirmed in Stanihurst’s descrip-

<sup>1</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs. in Ire. Fiants. Rep. 11, App. 3, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 48 Exeter book. Ilfracombe section.

<sup>3</sup> Des. of Ire., John Dymmok, 1600, in Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, 1842, p. 6.



tion: "Sheepe few, and those bearing course fleeces, whereof they spin notable rug. Their sheape have short and curt tales. They shaere their sheepe twice yearlie, and if they be left unshorne they are therewith rather pained than otherwise."<sup>1</sup> Thus success was mainly due to the nature of the local resources. As the name implies, export was more often by the piece than by the yard and the demand is illustrated by the request of Sir John Heneage (Vice-Chamberlain) to Sir George Carew, "to provide him with half-a-dozen of the finest and lightest Irish rugs to lay upon beds that can be gotten."<sup>2</sup> The average value according to the accounts was about 10/- each, but the price also depended on the size, and they were made in several, some being quite small. Thus a Weymouth Port Book for 1607 has "two packettes continentes 7 Irish ruggs" at £4 13s. 4d. or 13/4 each, and "More 3 ruggs and two small ruggs for cradles which hee (i.e. the master of the ship, Thomas Nicoles) craveth for his provision."<sup>3</sup> The seven rugs for 13/4 each must have been large, whereas the 35 entered in a Padstow Port Book for 1591 only average 4/- each and were assuredly "small ruggs," fit for cradles.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes ready-made gowns of this cloth were sent as is shown in the following entry at Southampton. "The 13th of Marche. In the Elizabeth of Waterford of the burthen of 30 tonns, Master Rychard Kelly, from Waterford to Hampton. Ffor Henry Fagan of Waterford, master, thyrtenne remnantes making eighte peeces of fryse, twentye lytle mantells and syxe rugg gownes."<sup>5</sup>

But the most important woollen goods were the characteristic Irish mantles. They held the first place in the national attire, and if the government objected to their use in Ireland because their adaptability made

<sup>1</sup> R. Stanihurst, Des. of Ire., in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, p. 20. If Irish sheep were shorn twice a year, rug fleece may have come from the first shearing.

<sup>2</sup> C. Car. MSS., III, p. 47 (1590).

<sup>3</sup> K.R.P.B. 888. <sup>4</sup> K.R.P.B. 1917.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.P.B. 816, 1575.

rebellion more easy, the feeling does not seem to have been shared by many in England. It is amazing to see the recurrence of *mantelles de Hibernia*, or "Irishe mantels" as an item in each merchant's bill of lading, and, although it was said that they served to the Irish "as to a hedgehog his skin, or to a snail her shell, for a garment by day and a house by night,"<sup>1</sup> certainly early in the century Englishmen must often have chosen to wear them—if not with quite the same eagerness. The amount of the export to the minor Cornish ports is remarkable; thus in three months of the year 1505-06, 96 mantles (amongst other goods) were brought from Ireland in Irish vessels to Fowey, Penzance, St. Ives, and Padstow.<sup>2</sup> During the first half of 1514-15, 213 were similarly conveyed to Plymouth, Padstow and St. Ives, 62 having formed the only items in the cargoes of six small Youghal boats.<sup>3</sup> All were valued for Custom at 3/4 each, amounting in the first instance to £16 os. od., and in the second to £35 10s. od. Such figures may not seem imposing, but it has to be remembered that the total trade of these small ports was not extensive, and that the above formed a not inconsiderable portion of the whole. In 1504, 2,320 mantles (value £386 13s. 4d.) were sent to Bristol,<sup>4</sup> and about a quarter that number to Bridgewater in the same year,<sup>5</sup> and these numbers are representative of the general average maintained for the first half of the century.

There was really quite a variety among those in use in Ireland, as the better classes had theirs embroidered or ornamented with fringes of many-coloured silks and wool,<sup>6</sup> but those exported must generally have been the ordinary frieze ones—often the grey of undyed fleece, sometimes brown or blue.<sup>7</sup> There were also consign-

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1588-92, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. 298.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 189.

<sup>5</sup> Ib. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Luke Gernons, A Discourse of Ire (1620), Stowe MSS., 180 f. 37.

<sup>7</sup> K.R.C.A. 33 Chester under date 7 Oct. (1585) Theobald Blacke brought from Ross "3 russett mantles and one dyed mantle." Also on 1st Dec. John Brangon, of Dublin, "9 cadowes and one blew mantell valued at 13/4."

ments of half and little mantles (at half the value), the former probably being short capes, and the latter for children. Where unusually large values are recorded they must have been of superior material and workmanship, but this rarely occurs in the normal trade. Finer wool, which came mostly from Spain, then the producer of some of the best wool in Europe, was required for the shaggy fringes, but some was also obtained in England. One entry shows 50 pounds "lani pro franges pro mantellis," value 13/4, shipped by John Goldyng and Richard Walshe from Exeter to Waterford in 1505.<sup>1</sup> Despite their popularity the export certainly dwindled in the latter half of the century—principally owing to the increasing choice in fabrics from the more progressive industries of England and the Continent which rather overshadowed the coarse Irish friezes, and, indeed, the trade would have dwindled even more had there not been one development in their manufacture. Thus a considerable number of the later kind sent were made from Waterford cloth and called "roug" or "russet." Thus Richard Willine of Beomaris, merchant, was entered for "36 russet mantels Irishe of his owne goodes and transported in a pykcard called the Eyle of Helbreg," at the Beomaris Custom House, paying 6/- subsidy on the estimated value of £6 os. od.<sup>2</sup> The peculiar characteristic of such mantles was the extreme shagginess of the material and Stanihurst relates an amusing incident in this connection. A friend of his living in London "repaired to Paris garden, clad in one of these Waterford rugs. The mastifs had no sooner espied him, but deeming he had beene a beare, would faine have baited him . . . whereupon he solemnlie vowed never to see beare-baiting in anie such weed."<sup>3</sup> Late in the century even the transport of these mantles appears to have been replaced by that of woolfells, especially the inferior kinds,

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 29<sup>1</sup> under 29th March, 1505.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.P.B. 13<sup>22</sup> 1563 (Chester, etc.).

<sup>3</sup> R. Stanihurst, *Des. of Ire.*, in *Holinshed's Chronicles*, p. 24.

such as bruck fells and morkyns (sheep and lamb killed by accident or disease). This is partly due to the general decline in the variety of Irish exports which brings the raw stuff into greater prominence. Thus during the year 1588, woolfells consisting of 34,676 sheep, 52,167 bruck and 19,100 lamb were brought to Chester and only 10 mantles, there being, however, 102 blankets and cadows, some 100 yards of frieze and rug and 6 frieze gowns.<sup>1</sup> At Bristol, once an important market for mantles, none were imported from May to July, 1590, but there were 41,550 morkins and bruckfells, 1,000 sheep and 200 lambfells brought in.<sup>2</sup> This was rather exceptional, perhaps, as in a similar period the following year sixteen mantles are mentioned, and 6,300 woolfells with 68 stones of wool and flocks.<sup>3</sup> At Bridgewater during the same time three mantles are opposed to 50 stone of wool and flocks,<sup>4</sup> and at the Cornish ports a few pairs to some hundred pounds of wool.<sup>5</sup> Of course the accounts vary from year to year, but the above is representative of the state of affairs after 1590.

## (2) LINEN

"Ireland yields much flax, which the inhabitants work into yarn, export in great quantity, and of old, they had such plenty of linen cloth as the wild Irish used to wear 30 or 40 ells in a shirt all gathered and wrinkled and washed in saffron, because they never put them off till they were worn out."<sup>6</sup>

So wrote Fynes Moryson in 1601 of linen, and in that sentence he has summarised its history under the Tudor regime. The making of Irish linen cloth by no means

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{31}{32-35}$ .

<sup>2</sup> Ib.  $\frac{24}{41}$ .

<sup>3</sup> K.R.P.B.  $\frac{1131}{11}$ .

<sup>4</sup> Ib.  $\frac{1083}{10}$ .

<sup>5</sup> Ib.  $\frac{1217}{2}$ . Note.—Like other commodities these later mantles are estimated at a higher value, about 5/- each.

<sup>6</sup> F. Moryson, *Des. of Ire.*, ed. H. Morley, p. 422.



began with the encouragement given to it by William III, rather did he revive an almost lost art. It had for long been made in Ireland in great quantities to supply the extravagant needs of the native dress. Henry VIII's act for "English order, habite and language" which condemned mantles and saffron dyeing, thought it also necessary to forbid the use of more than seven yards in shirts or smocks<sup>1</sup>—and was equally unsuccessful in all its objects. The women were similarly extravagant in their apparel and required many yards to form their various head-dresses,<sup>2</sup> so that early in the sixteenth century linen weaving was general throughout the country, and after the natives had been supplied there was some over for external trade. It formed a considerable item in the bills of lading at Bristol in 1504-05<sup>3</sup> and 1519-20,<sup>4</sup> and indeed was fairly regularly conveyed there throughout the period, for in 1558-9 as much as 112 *panni* and 1,472 yards, worth £26 16s. 10d., is recorded,<sup>5</sup> but to the Cornish ports the transport was variable. Even at Bridgewater the accounts for many years are almost void of such entries, while others record considerable quantities. In 1550, 890 yards were consigned there from Youghal and 50 yards of Irish canvas.<sup>6</sup> The latter is rarely mentioned, but the art of making this variety of linen material was not unknown in Ireland, and it is significant that it was occasionally exported about this date and before the wholesale shipment of unworked thread became serious. Nevertheless, a perusal of the accounts does not show as much Irish linen sent to England as might be expected early in the period—a fact which may be explained in two ways. Probably most of the supplies for external consumption were exhausted in satisfying the Continental traffic, while the English demand may not have

<sup>1</sup> *Stat. in Ir. Parl.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 121 (1537).

<sup>2</sup> Camden, W., *Britannia*, ed. R. Gough, III, pp. 668-9, also p. 659.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 199.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 199.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 24.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 29.

## 88 ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN 16TH CENTURY

been extensive, owing to the large choice among the foreign imported cloths.

However, the important feature of the Tudor regime is the increase in the export of the raw material. Yarn or "linei fili" had always been sent away to a certain extent, but it was the depletion of the unwrought resources in Elizabeth's reign which grievously injured the cloth industry, despite all attempts to prevent it. Thus the act of 1569 (quoted in connection with wool) imposed a custom of 1/- sterling on every pound of flax or linen yarn going out of the country.<sup>1</sup> The tax was naturally evaded whenever possible, as is recorded in the following incident, when James Browne of Dublin, "maryner," informed the Court that he had seized to the Queen's use and his own<sup>2</sup> "upon the sea near le sound of Dalkey," in a drover belonging to John Garrot of Dublin, three packs of yarn, being the goods of unknown merchants which were put on board to be carried to foreign parts, the Queen's customs being unpaid.<sup>3</sup> The statute, however, must have had some effect in encouraging the manufacture of linen cloth, since in 1571, when the free merchants in Ireland claimed certain privileges of exportation, it was said to be carried away by "French, Scottish, Spanish, as other nations."<sup>4</sup> The effort to keep yarn in the country (in spite of small breaches of the law, like John Garrot's) might have been very successful, but for the permits subsequently granted in contravention of the terms of the Statute of 1569.

Irish public opinion was aware of the damage done by these licenses, but remonstrances availed less than in the case of wool, because by 1570 an industry had grown up round Manchester which largely depended

<sup>1</sup> *Irish Stat.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 349, II Eliz., cap. 20.

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with regulations in the Act.

<sup>3</sup> R.I. Acad. Hal. Coll. Extracts. Mem. Rolls. Ire., 1383-1643, p. 371 (1571).

<sup>4</sup> *Irish Stat.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 376, the privileges were extended to woollen, leather and linen goods.

on yarn brought from Ireland, and the interests of English merchants carried more weight. This is clearly evidenced in the series of documents concerning the permit to Edward Moore in 1572, "to export 3,000 packs of linen yarn, accounting 400 pounds weight, at the rate of 6 score pounds weight to every hundredweight for a pack" and proportionately for half packs or otherwise.<sup>1</sup> The grant raised a storm of opposition. Even the Lord Deputy and Council wrote to the Privy Council earnestly pleading the necessity of keeping the yarn in the country,<sup>2</sup> while the Mayor and citizens of Dublin and Drogheda wrote protesting to the Queen,<sup>3</sup> to Burghley<sup>4</sup> and to the Privy Council<sup>5</sup> and sent factors to represent their case, declaring that the size of the grant was preposterous and comprised more than could be found in the realm during the five years for which it was limited. Meanwhile the following counter petition came from the north of England.

"The causes that maye move her Majestie to grante the lycence for transportinge of Irishe yarne into Englande. Ffirste because it hath ever been lawfull tyll of late that a restraint was made by an acte of Parliamente in Irelande at the petition of the merchauntes of the same cuntrye, pretendinge that the yarne shulde be made into lynnene cloth theire which pretence takith no effecte for lacke of weavers and other artificers in that realme. Also where upon the transportinge of the same yarne in tymes paste into the countries of Chester and Lancaster, the poor people of the same cuntries especially aboute Manchester were set on worke to the reliefe of iiiii<sup>m</sup> persons within that lordship only (as appered by theire supplicacion redy to be exhibited this laste Parliamente) the same poor people for lacke of worke are utterlye impoverished living idely and redy to faule into miserable shiftes and extremities. Also

<sup>1</sup> C.P. and C. Rolls Ire., Vol. I, p. 547.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 474.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. p. 475. <sup>4</sup> Ib. p. 475. <sup>5</sup> Ib. p. 482.

whereas theire greive unto her Majestie a good revenue yerely by the custome of such yarne in her highness posts of Chester and Lysterpoole ; the same revenue is utterlie extinguished whereof parte shulde be revived for so maynie packes as shulde be contained within the lycence required. Also it maye be provid that for lacke of lawfull vent the makinge of that yarne is nowe decainge in Ireland the people beinge naturally gyven to idleness leave off to manure theire grounde for flax as hathe byne accustomed, and lastely the merchauntes theire do ordinarily steale over the said yarne into forreine realmes at certayne havens and creekes in the Irishe cuntries, where her Majestie hath no officers to demand her dueties. Therefore for as muche as this acte in Irelande is but an innovation not takinge the effecte for which it was ment, the cuntries of Chessheire and Lancasheire impoverishd and by this lycence to be relevied, her Majestie's custome revived, the makinge of yarne in Irelande mayntained and the Irishe marchauntes of their unlawfull stelth preventid, I hope your good Lord wyll the rather upon theis reasonable causes perswade that this lycence maye be grauntid extendinge onlie to 3,000 packes, . . . to be transported into England . . . with libertie to attache and take all yarne that shall come over to be solde not warranted . . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The above is, of course, merely typical of the commercial feeling of the age, and doubtless some yarn was sent abroad, but the tendency to do so was certainly increased by an enforced export to England which engulfed all the stores for Irish work ; it also demonstrates how valuable to Cheshire was the Irish produce. Faced by remonstrances on both sides, the Queen compromised by reducing the grant to 2,000 packs,<sup>2</sup> and to this the merchants of Dublin and Drogheda eventually submitted with reluctance, but when the Lord Deputy

<sup>1</sup> S.P. Ire. Eliz., Vol. 35, no. 49.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 493.



reported their acquiescence, he implored Lord Burghley to use his influence with the Queen that "hereafter there may not be any such grant passed."<sup>1</sup>

The hope was vain, and the permits continued. Sir Henry Sydney in 1583 relates how during his deputyship he did his best by passing an act prohibiting himself and his successors for ever from granting licenses for linen yarn, but that Sir William Gerrard then obtained his from the Queen.<sup>2</sup> Despite the advice of her better counsellors they were still given, partly because of the money they brought to the grantor, since English merchants were ready to pay for the privilege. Thus Antony Stoughton writing to Sir John Perrot stated that Mydellmore's license was worth £3,000 to Walsingham.<sup>3</sup> Again in 1591 Elizabeth gave permission to Richard Carmarden of London and his agents to take to Chester, Liverpool or Bristol yearly for seven years 1,200 packs of linen yarn at the rate of 400 pounds weight to the pack and 6 score pounds weight to every 100 pounds, "and if so many may not be had and vented the first yere, then to ship soe many more the second yere, as over and above the 1,200 packs so to be brought and vented for the second yere shall suffice to make up the number of 1,200 packs," and so from year to year.<sup>4</sup> The Memoranda Rolls contain an account of the distribution of this export from the Irish ports in 1592-93. There was shipped from Dundalk 48 packs, 300 pounds, Carlingford 95 packs, 200 pounds, Drogheda 436 packs, 30 pounds, and from Dublin 443 packs 9 quarters and 15 pounds, making a total of 1,123 packs, 14 quarters and 15 pounds.<sup>5</sup> Licenses such as this were fatal to the

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* p. 518.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Car. MSS.* II, p. 350.

<sup>3</sup> *C.S.P. Ire.*, 1588-92, p. 280.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P. and C. Rolls, Ire.*, Vol. 2, pp. 535-6.

<sup>5</sup> *R.I. Acad. Hal. Coll. Mem. Rolls. Ire. Extracts*, 1383-1643, pp. 459-61. In connection with this grant see letter from the Earl of Derby to the Corporation of Chester that satisfaction might be given to the officers of M. Carmarden, patentee for the transportation of Irish yarn who complained that they are "debarred at Chester of the first weve and seasure of suche yarne as is broughte in," the usual trouble resulting from interference in the normal course of trade. (*Hist. MSS. Comm. App. to 8th Report*, p. 355).

industry and partly account for the fact that in 1601 Fynes Moryson found that yarn only, was being made, and not cloth. Another reason was the devastation of the South by the Elizabethan wars, which destroyed the flax-growing and linen-weaving of Munster. While early in the century linen was sent from Youghal and other towns of Co. Cork, at the end yarn was almost confined to Leinster, and the Chester accounts corroborate the Memoranda Rolls in showing that it was almost entirely exported from Dublin, Drogheda, Carlingford or Dundalk.<sup>1</sup>

The history of both the woollen and linen trades in Ireland need not have been so depressing. English merchants only acted in accordance with the economic prejudice of the times—but they wielded a fatal power. Otherwise there was no reason why Ireland should not have had flourishing cloth industries and maintained the native custom which contemporary Irish poems describe as among the occupations of the unconquered Gael.

“Coverlets being prepared, morn and even,  
Young maidens engaged in arranging down.”<sup>2</sup>

was O’Rahilly’s remembrance of O’Callaghan’s princely mansion, and Tadhg Dall O’Huiginn sang of the “slender-lipped, satin-clad maidens, weaving wondrous golden fringes,”<sup>3</sup> when he commemorated Maguire’s hospitality. But first the making of linen was artificially checked and then that of woollen cloth, although as a compensation for destroying the latter the former was at a later date revived. Yet the actual material damage done in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the subordination of Irish to English interests was small compared with the more permanently evil effects thereby engendered.

<sup>1</sup> See K.R.C.A. 33-35. Yarn to value of about £17,000 exported from these parts.

<sup>2</sup> Ir. Texts Soc., Vol. 3, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> C. Maxwell, *Irish History from Contemporary Sources*, p. 336.

While Europe developed her cloth manufactures on normal lines Ireland was kept back, her people lost touch with the one form of industrial life to which they had become accustomed and fell yet further behind in the general march of economic progress.

## CHAPTER VI

### HAWKS, HOUNDS AND HORSES

" No beastes (I saie) which do possesse one jote of crewell kinde,  
Except the wolfe that noisome is, in Irish soile I find,  
But as for other sortes of beastes, delihtyng mortall eye,  
Therein consists her chefest praise; who maie it here denye?  
First for gallant stovryng steed, man's helpe at all assaies;  
And next for meate, whereby his life is lengthened sondrie waies."

John Derrick, *Image of Ireland*, 1581 (Printed in Lord Somer's Tracts, Vol. I, p. 579).

THE export of hawks, greyhounds and horses must be mentioned here, for though commercially they were unimportant in the sixteenth century trade with England, their excellence made them famous throughout Europe, and licenses for their transportation were much sought after, even by foreign magnates. Thus the State Papers preserve an order from the Queen to Lord Deputy Sydney (as late as 1568), that at the request of the Portuguese Ambassador permission had been granted to Don Antonio, son of the Infant Don Ludovico, to buy "horses, hawks and dogs yearly out of Ireland."<sup>1</sup> Hawks, indeed, had been bred expressly for trade in the fifteenth century, but the imposition of heavy customs in 1480 tended to check this. The Statute explains that "Whereas hawks of divers natures . . . were formerly of great plenty in the land of Ireland, to the pleasure of our Sovereign Lord the king, and other lords and gentry of his kingdom of England, and of the said land of Ireland, chiefly for merchandise to be sold; rather than for any other cause, in so much that no hawks can be had for the pleasure of our Sovereign Lord the King etc. . . . whereupon it is . . . enacted . . . that what ever merchants shall take or carry hawks out of the said

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 380.



land of Ireland, shall pay for each sparrow-hawk 13/4, a tercel 6/8, a falcon 10/- of custom and poundage accordingly."<sup>1</sup> The rate was high as the value of money went in those days, and must have resulted in their being frequently smuggled both to England and abroad. Thus at Chester in 1569, Laddy Brady was brought before the Corporation for illegally importing two hawks and six terrels.<sup>2</sup> However, the accounts do show regular entries for one or even a "caste" (two) of goshawks or "merlions" at a time.<sup>3</sup> Derrick enumerates eight species, goshawks being the chief, then falcons, two kinds of terrels, merlions, spar hawks, jacks and muskets:

"These are the hawks which chiefly breed in fertile Irishe groundes;

Whose matche for flight and speedie wyng else where be hardly founde."<sup>4</sup>

Certainly their position among the exports was as honoured gifts, and the Earl of Ossory's letter to his servant Cowley in 1539 is amusingly characteristic of the many instances of nobles desiring them in England: "I doo send at this time 3 goshawks, one olde and two younge, whereof I will that Maister Secretarie (Cromwell) doo chewse 2 hawks and my Lord Chancellor may have the thirde, and that as few know thereof as ye may, and especially that my Lord of Wiltshire (Sir T. Boleyn) know not thereof."<sup>5</sup> Even in 1601 Fynes Moryson said "The hawks of Ireland, called Goshawks, are much esteemed in England, and they are sought out by many and all means to be transported thither,"<sup>6</sup> though by that time they were much scarcer and more difficult to obtain.

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls Ire., note a. to p. 113, stat. 20 Ed. IV.

<sup>2</sup> Sir B. C. A. Windle, *Chester*, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> Especially Bristol K.R.C.A. 2<sup>o</sup> and 1<sup>o</sup>2.

<sup>4</sup> J. Derrick, *Image of Ire.*, Somer's Tracts, Vol. I, p. 580.

<sup>5</sup> S.P. pt. 3, Vol. II, p. 275, cf. C.S.P. Ire. Hen. VIII, p. 72 (1545). St. Leger sent the king two goshawks and two merlions, and Dep. Keeper Recs. Ire. Fiants. Rep. 17, app. IV, p. 154, part of MacGwyre's rent was a cast of goshawks.

<sup>6</sup> F. Moryson, *Des. of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 422.

Equally, if not more desired, were Irish hounds, especially the unique breed known as wolf hounds, though not always so differentiated. Their origin has been very variously ascribed—it may indeed have been Phœnician—but as far back as Celtic literature goes they are mentioned with esteem. Tradition relates that the boat which bore St. Patrick away from his slavery on Mt. Slemish carried a consignment of wolf hounds for sale in France,<sup>1</sup> and in bardic poetry stress is often laid on the possession of magnificent hounds as honoured members of the domestic circle. Thus even in 1589 O’Huigin relates in his poem on Maguire’s hospitality, how he was “startled at the tumult; the baying of their lively hounds, and their hunting dogs driving deer from the woods for them.”<sup>2</sup> If by the Tudor period they were not so magnificent as in the days of heroic legend, still throughout the Middle Ages they enjoyed a European reputation which was in the end the chief factor in their destruction. Foreign potentates always wanted to breed them, and the dogs were continually transported in pairs. Even in the sixteenth century their scarcity began to be felt, and by the end of the seventeenth century the original type was almost extinct, and though attempts have been made to revive the race, it has been impossible to recover these “fair, sleek hounds,” often pure white and “bigger of bone and limb than a colt.”<sup>3</sup> In Ireland they were still kept not only for deer hunting but to guard against, as well as to hunt wolves—a very necessary precaution when the number in the country and the quantity of wolf skins exported are considered—while abroad they were thought, “fair, and fierce for the wild boar.” Guicciardini told the Earl of Essex that the Duke would like nothing better than “some dogs of the country of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Symmachus’ preparations for his son’s games in Rome when his son was made praetor and Irish dogs were shown. Sym. Ep. II, 77 (393 A.D.).

<sup>2</sup> C. Maxwell, *Contemporary Sources of Irish Hist.*, 1509-1610, p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> E. H. Hogan, *Hist. of the Irish Wolf Dog*, p. 29.

Ireland for that purpose."<sup>1</sup> Henry IV of France's letter to Essex further demonstrates the idea of the export: "Mon cousin, Parmy les autres oblygasyons . . . yl faut aye je vous aye ancor cete cy, que vous me facyes recouvrer un levryer d'Yrlande et une levrette de mesme quy ne soynt poynt chastree, afyn que j'an puyse tyrer race. Vous savez comme j'ayme la chasse, et ce sera pour me fere passer le tams, et quelques foys prendre les sanglyer, et essayer sy la bonté de ses chiens les respond à la reputasyon quyls ont."<sup>2</sup> Presents of hawks and greyhounds were also found useful for procuring the goodwill of the great lords of the King's Council. In 1535, when the Corporation of Kinsale desired the renewal of the town's patent and the right of keeping the cocket to maintain the walls, the principal merchant, Philip Roche, sent two falcons, three "merlons," a sparrow-hawk, and two greyhounds to Cromwell as a means to gain his favourable influence with Henry VIII.<sup>3</sup>

Fortunately, as regards horses, the sixteenth century fame has not been lost, and even then the reputation was mainly for the lighter breed, or "hobbies." Stanishurst has an interesting passage on the whole subject, where he declares: "The horses are of pase easie, in running wonderful swift, in gallop both false and full indifferent. The nag or hackenie is verie good for travelling, albeit, others report the contrarie. And if he be broken accordinglie, you shall have a little tit that will travel a whole daie without anie bait. Their horses of service are called chiefe horses, being well broken they are of an excellent courage. They reine passinglie, and champe upon their bridels brauelie, commonlie they amble not, but gallop and run. And these horses are but for skirmishes, not for travelling,

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. MSS. Marquis of Salisbury, pt. VI, p. 155 (1596).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* part V, p. 511. Also cf. that as a reward to the Marquis of Saria and his sons for military service they were to be sent during their lifetime two goshawks and four greyhounds (*leporarios canes*) yearly. C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 13.

for their stomachs are such, as they disdaine to be hacknied. Thereof the report grew, that the Irish hobbie will not hold out in travelling. You shall have of the third sort a bastard or mongrell hobbie, neere as tall as the horse of service, strong in travelling, easie in ambling, and verie swift in running. Of the horse of service they make great store, as wherein at times of need they repose a great peece of safetie." He then goes on to say that this breed must have come originally from Spain, and have belonged to the race of Genetts.<sup>1</sup>

According to the report of the Papal Legate, which has already been quoted, many Irish horses were better suited to war than the English, and were bred in large numbers.<sup>2</sup> This fact is corroborated by Payne, who remarked that while the chief horses were as expensive as in England, cart horses, mares and little hackneys were so cheap and plentiful that the meanest Irishman disdained to ride on a mare.<sup>3</sup> A contemporary poem by Tadhg Dall O'Huiginn, in honour of the hospitality of Cu Chonnacht Og Maguire, vividly portrays the wealth of horse-flesh possessed by an unconquered chief: "Thus did I find the lawn of the castle—upturned by the hooves of steeds from the prancing of horses competing for triumph no herb flourished in the soil of the outer yard. The horses of the castle (were) running in contest, again I see them coursing one by one, until the surrounding hills were hidden, and no mist was upon them save the faces of steeds."<sup>4</sup> There was undoubtedly a considerable export to the Continent where Irish horses were in demand, and the traffic was largely in the hands of the native Irish breeders. This is clearly evidenced by the attempts, characteristic of that century, to transfer the profits, even of this branch of trade, into English hands. The Commission in 1507 to Gerald, Earl of Kildare, for his Parliament, contains the draft of a clause

<sup>1</sup> R. Stanihurst, *Des. of Ire.*, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P. Rome, Eliz., Vol. I, p. 390 (1591).

<sup>3</sup> R. Payne, *Des. of Ire.*, 1589. Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, Vol. I, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> C. Maxwell, *Irish Hist. from Contemporary Sources, 1509-1610*, p. 336.



prohibiting any horses or "hobbies" from being shipped except to England, and by the king's subjects from parts where there were officers. The penalty for infringement was £20.<sup>1</sup> Henry VIII's letter to the Earl of Kildare in 1515, was much to the same effect complaining that aliens took hawks, hobbies, and other commodities into "Spayn, France, Brytayne and other parties."<sup>2</sup> Anxiety over the payment of customs was an important factor in such orders, but they also indicate a profitable trade in horses abroad and a tendency not to send them to England. Indeed, to judge from the Custom's Accounts they were seldom transported to England in the course of trade. The entries are occasional—some occurring at Bristol early in the century<sup>3</sup>—but most of little value, like that at Cardiff in 1587 for "five mares and four kyne." £6 os. od.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless they were not despised as gifts, and Sir William Russell, when he was Deputy, presented Sir Robert Cecil with a cast of goshawks and "an Irish nag," which he procured with difficulty owing to the then prevailing scarcity (1596).<sup>5</sup>

As with hawks and hounds legitimate transportation by means of licenses was sought after by foreign noblemen, and the Venetian State Papers give interesting examples, since they contain some continuous correspondence on the subject. In 1498 Henry VII wrote to the Lord Hercules, Duke of Ferrara, Modena, etc., assuring him that he had empowered his agent Biasio to cross over to Ireland and to purchase hobbies with the aid of the Lord Deputy. "The said Biasio has now returned with some amblers which we hope are good and highly couraged."<sup>6</sup> Presumably they were satisfactory, for in 1527, Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara ordered his Ambassador in England, Hieronimo Ferrofino, to get permission to transport from Ireland as many as "eight

<sup>1</sup> C. Pat. Rolls Eng. Henry VII, Vol. II, p. 576.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 9, app. p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 122 etc.

<sup>4</sup> Ib. 230.

<sup>5</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. MSS. of Marquis of Salisbury, pt. IV, p. 298.

<sup>6</sup> C. Ven. S.P. Vol. 6, part 3, p. 1603.



hobby mares and two hobby stallions *to breed from*.”<sup>1</sup> A little later Hieronimo wrote complaining of delay in procuring them, having only got a bay hobby “of very good and handsome presence, his paces also being soft and agreeable, though his forelegs are swollen, but he does not seem to suffer from it.”<sup>2</sup> Still later, tired of waiting, he reported that he had bought the rest in England, but that three of these were Irish.<sup>3</sup>

Horses were involved in the question of army supplies. This partially explains their reluctant production for those connected with the administration, or for foreign agents favoured by the government, although up to the end of the century there were still some for illegal export. From about 1573 the official scarcity became acute, for by then the Elizabethan wars seriously affected the state of the country and especially that of the Pale. Moreover, with Spanish preparations looming on the horizon, the foreign traffic became not merely a matter of evaded customs, but of draining the country of stock which the administration required for military purposes. In 1580 all transportation was forbidden, the Lords Justices writing to the Lords in England: “We pray you not to mislike of a proclamation against the passing over of horses, the scarcity is so extreme. The numbers daily transported to Scotland and France under pretence to be sent to England is very great.”<sup>4</sup> The scarcity was similar to that which prevailed in the Pale in corn or any commodity which the Government was likely to commandeer. It was made a reality by the methods which they pursued. Since requisitions were usually unpaid for, or at low prices, and in a debased currency, the obvious course was to smuggle such goods away, wherever possible, and thus get some price for them. The whole affair worked in a vicious circle, for the harder it was to obtain necessities for the army, the sterner became the regulations enforcing the giving of provisions,

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* p. 1606.    <sup>2</sup> *Ib.* pp. 1611-12.    <sup>3</sup> *Ib.* pp. 1613-14.

<sup>4</sup> *C. Car. MSS.* II, p. 201.

and against export. And as the improbability of payment increased, the more it became a matter of policy as well as of circumstance to possess nothing which could be taken. The Student's book on the state of Ireland gives tragic evidence of the lot of the ordinary husbandman in the Pale, even in 1551, owing to the claims of the army ;<sup>1</sup> naturally at the end of the century with the spread of occupied areas the conditions were worse. To this was mainly due the difficulty so much complained of, which was experienced in obtaining horses and the fact that numbers were still sent abroad. Yet there was little profit in breeding for the convenience of requisitions, and it was at least fortunate that devastations of material prosperity and the suppression of native talents did not wholly extinguish the people's capacity for horse-rearing.

<sup>1</sup> S.P. Ire. Eliz. Vol. 5, no. 51.

## CHAPTER VII

### FATS, FOODSTUFFS, CATTLE AND CORN

"The fields are not only most apt to feed cattle, but yield also great increase of corn. . . . This plenty of grass makes the Irish have infinite multitudes of cattle, and in the heat of the last rebellion the very vagabond rebels had great multitudes of cows, which they still, like the nomades, drove with them whithersoever themselves were driven, and fought for them as for their altars and families."—F. Moryson, *Des. of Ire.*, ed. H. Morley, pp. 419-20.

THE remaining exports are somewhat miscellaneous in character, though not therefore without importance. Several, however, can be grouped under a general classification of foodstuffs, including edible and non-edible fats. Of these *wax*, or *cere*, was the principal, early in the century, when it was one of the most constant items in the individual bills of lading. The contributions varied from a few pounds, perhaps five, to over a hundred, but some was sent by nearly every merchant. The early average was about  $4\frac{1}{2}d.$  a pound; thus at Bristol in 1504 some 5,000 pounds were entered at that rate, i.e. amounting to about £80 worth.<sup>1</sup> But Ireland could not spare it in unlimited quantities and a Waterford Corporation Statute of 1518 indicates that some restrictions were thought necessary for the comfort of the town. The decree enacted "that no manere of man, what degre he be of, shall carry no flocks ne wax, over the sea, and that no freman nor foraine sill no wax to scolers, upon pain of forfecture of the same"—assuredly an irritating regulation for the said "scolers."<sup>2</sup> By the middle of the sixteenth century wax is less often mentioned and is replaced by

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 10, app. V, p. 327.

tallow (*cepum*—lat. *sebum*) or “cepe rough,” which also occurs early in the period, but does not become of special importance until the end. Then it is found at Chester and Liverpool, transported from Dublin, Drogheda and Dundalk in enormous quantities, both in the “rendered” and “rough” states, the latter being cheaper and supplied in the greater proportions. Thus at Bristol in 1558 only £34 worth was recorded,<sup>1</sup> but during the year 1588-89 the entries at Chester and Liverpool amounted to about £1,000 worth for some 19,500 weight, of which 4,300 weight was “rendered,” and 12,300 weight was “rough.” In these entries the prices per hundred weight are very irregular, the average estimation for the “rendered” varying from 16/8 to £1 and that for the “rough” from 8/- to 16/-.<sup>2</sup> At a time when candles were the sole means of illumination, wax and tallow were very vital commodities of the period and great quantities were thus consumed for lighting purposes. Hence they were not the least valuable of Ireland’s raw materials. Excessive transport of tallow had, in the same way as that of wax, to be guarded against, and the following extract from the laws of the city of Dublin in 1557 gives a good illustration of the fact. It was ordained “that noe butchers of this Cittie shall sell any tallow to a forrener without the Maior’s speciall licence, but to the Cittizens of this Cittie. And that the Aldermen and Constables . . shall sett out and appoint from tyme to tyme what store shalbee sufficient for the householders of their wardes. And that which shall remain after the Citizens soe served shalbee sould to the Candle makers of this Cittie and to none others.”<sup>3</sup> But the Butchers continued to be delinquents. They probably found that export—such as that to Chester—or sale to foreign merchants was more profitable than purely local trade, and as late as 1619, the Commons of Dublin lodged a

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 24.      <sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 32-35.

<sup>3</sup> R.I. Acad. Hal. Coll. Laws of the City of Dublin, p. 77.



similar complaint against them. No particular restrictions were advocated, except that the butchers should sell to city merchants, and not to Dutchmen and "other unfreemen being noe staplers here,"<sup>1</sup> and so keep the profits of the trade in the hands of natives. Certainly tallow is among the commodities which were illegally conveyed out of Ireland "in greate abundance" according to a Fiant of 1566.<sup>2</sup> In Cogan's report of 1611 it is enumerated among the products of nearly every town and was of very considerable importance in the seventeenth century.

Oil was also occasionally exported, and increasingly as the century advanced. While Bridgewater in 1504 only got one pipe of the value of £2,<sup>3</sup> Bristol in 1591 obtained from Waterford one ton, half a barrel and 200 "jars of oyle."<sup>4</sup> This was home produced, but "trane" or fish oil was sometimes re-exported with the Newfoundland fish. Probably some credit must be given to the enterprise of Peter de Maistres and John Williams licensed in 1584, for the planting and dressing of woad, madder and rape. The first named was not successful, but the rape and linseed for making oil "after the manner of Flanders"<sup>5</sup> may have yielded sufficient to supplement the existing export.

Two species of edible fats are mentioned in the accounts, neither so frequently as wax or tallow, but often enough to prove that they were recognised items of the external trade. In the Bristol books, 1510-30, occur many entries for lard, or rough mutton fat, "cepe multon," and it is also placed among the prohibited exports in 1566 and 1577.<sup>6</sup> The other fat described at the end of the period is pork grease which is connected

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 10, app. IV, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs. in Ire. Rep. XI, app. III, p. 129, and cf. similar Fiant Rep. 13, app. IV, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 228.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.P.B. 1111.

<sup>5</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Vol. II, p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs. in Ire. Fiant. Rep. XI, App. III, p. 129. and Rep. 13, App. IV, p. 36.

with the development of the provision trade in meat.

Mediæval Ireland, like the Ireland of to-day, was not without some reputation for the production and transport of meat, but until the latter part of the sixteenth century this was limited to beef and flesh (which probably included mutton), both of course being salted. The beef was usually shipped in hogsheads valued at about £2 each, and the flesh in barrels for £2 13s. 4d. Both were sent principally to Bristol, the import of the former there during the year 1559-60 amounting to 40 hogsheads, i.e. about £80's worth.<sup>1</sup> Flesh is recorded mainly in the early accounts, while beef is mentioned at a later date and at a greater variety of ports. The quantity of meat entered in the English books scarcely represents the basis of Ireland's reputation, however—this rested, rather, on the supplies sent abroad. The English merchant already quoted, expressly enumerates with "tallowe" the "salte beffe"<sup>2</sup> which could be taken to the Continent from Western Ireland; it was the west or south west which traded so much with Spain, and which was most noted for its beef. The irritation aroused in English merchants by the profitable exchanges with the Spanish fleets has already been described in the chapter dealing with fish. Beef was a successful product of the native Irish—Offaly before the plantations was known as "the land of Cattle" whose Lords, the O'Connors "spent their lands on knowledge,"<sup>3</sup> while even in 1600 Fynes Moryson noted the "plenty of grass" which made easy the possession of multitudes of cattle.<sup>4</sup> Thus the beef trade was principally in the hands of the natives who found it an excellent commodity to offer the Spaniards. John Corbine, writing to Cecil in 1569, especially lamented the two hundred sail which came annually to the south-west coast, "fysheth there, and caryeth away 2,000

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 2<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> N. S. B. Gras, *Evolution of the Corn Market*, p. 436.

<sup>3</sup> *Des. of Ire.*, 1598, ed. E. Hogan, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup> See quotation at heading of this chapter.

beffes, hydes and tallow.”<sup>1</sup> Certainly considerable supplies were thus illicitly shipped and (until the entire devastation of Munster) it was mainly the native Irish who could offer the commodity in large quantities, for the inhabitants of the Pale, or any districts where the soldiers were stationed, seldom had many food-stuffs to spare, after the cesses. From about 1565 the strain of provisioning the army became more and more acute, partly owing to the destruction of war, and partly to the exorbitant practice of cessing which consumed most of the grain and beeves of the people. When Sir Edward Fyton wrote to Cecil he complained of the lack of money which made impossible “the maintaining the soldiers without cessing them on the country,” but he also confessed that “the cess of the English is so intolerable that it grieved him at the heart,”<sup>2</sup> Broken faith in the matter of payment made it more difficult to obtain foodstuffs, not only because of the impoverishment of the country, but because of the impetus it gave to smuggling. And even when requisitioned supplies were paid for, the rates were absurdly low. The Student’s book on the state of Ireland describes how “The befe taken up at 8/- sterling being commonly solde in the cuntrey at 23/4 sterling. The mutton taken up for 1/- sterling being commonly solde for 4/- sterling. The gallon of butter taken up for 1/- . . . for 4/- and the porke taken up for 5/- . . . 15/- sterling.”<sup>3</sup> It is not surprising that some of the later English Custom’s returns have not many entries for beef, etc., since about 1566 the legal transport of such foodstuffs was restricted. In that year there is a Fiat authorising George Lodge to stop the illegal export of merchandise from Ireland because “dyverse and sundry wares, marchandizes and victualls by the penall lawes and others . . . prohibited to be laden

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 405.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 437 (1571).

<sup>3</sup> S.P. Ire, Eliz., Vol. V, no. 51 (1551).

out of this Realme, as wheat and all other kinds of grayne, beif, larde, bacon, butter, tallowe, wax, wooll, flocks, tanned lether, hawks, hobbies, horses, and dyverse other staple ware . . . in greate abundance conveyed . . . into partes beyonds the sea yearly by certayne merchants as well of our owne subjects as others, onelye for their pryvate gayne without respect of . . . the necessarie lawes . . . and to the hindrance not only of our prvisions for our garyson and fortes—but also unreasonable prises.”<sup>1</sup>

A statute of 1569 indicates that the above orders were not so absolutely prohibitive and mainly referred to the question of customs. This act has been mentioned in connection with woollen cloth, and it also endeavoured to encourage the more finished production of foodstuffs, as well as their retention at home by placing heavy customs on the export of uncasked beef, tallow, wax or butter.<sup>2</sup> But a Fiat of 1577 providing authority similar to that given in 1566, complains of the negligence and corrupt dealings of searchers, water bailiffs, etc., which implies that the prohibited goods were still transported in large quantities.<sup>3</sup> There was not indeed much encouragement for the legitimate trade in meat, but there evidently was a very considerable, if smuggled export, carried on mainly by the native Irish outside the Pale, but also by Anglo-Irish subjects who desired to save something of their substance from the cesses. Thus the foundations were laid for the successful seventeenth century provision traffic to the West Indies. Incidentally, it is also interesting to note that the beginnings of the Irish export trade in live cattle to England can similarly be traced to the end of this period. The 1588-89 accounts for Chester and Liverpool show

<sup>1</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs. Ire. Rep. II, App. III, p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> *Stat. in Ire.*, F. Vesey, II. Eliz., Cap. 20, p. 249. Each pound of beef uncasked was charged 1d., a half barrel 10/-, whole barrel 20/-, hogshead 40/-, pipe £4, a stone of tallow 2/-, pound of wax 1/-, pound of butter 6d. In the seventeenth century care in packing for the West Indies was eventually acquired.

<sup>3</sup> Dep. Keeper. Recs. Ire. Rep. 13, App. IV, p. 36.



76 " quicke kyne " and 15 " quicke beeves " at an average value of about £1 each<sup>1</sup>—thus early were the eastern Irish pasture lands beginning to supply the raw material for butchers' meat to the industrial areas of Northern England.

One observation must be made about butter, which is named in the lists of provisions referred to above, and also among the articles which Lord Deputy St. Leger prohibited from export in 1550.<sup>2</sup> It is not found enumerated in the Customs' Accounts, although according to the regulations it was sent out of the country to an appreciable extent. It may have been shipped to England under special licenses which do not appear in the Accounts, but more probably was mainly consigned abroad. One entry in a Cardiff book strengthens the latter assumption. The " Mermaid of Dyvelyin (Dublin) in Ireland, burthen 50 tonnes " touched at Cardiff and left for Rochell with a cargo including " 40 barrells of butter " value £60, subsidy £3.<sup>3</sup> As at that date (1587) Irish shipping was in a bad condition, and scarcely sufficed for the home carrying trade, the "Mermaid" is unlikely to have taken abroad other than Irish commodities.

The production of pig meat for export dates its development from the close of the sixteenth century. According to Stanihurst the native Irish preferred pork to all other meat, and he quotes the story about O'Neill's follower who, when asked if veal was not better than pork, replied, " You might as well ask if you were not a greater man than O'Neill." <sup>4</sup> But if pork was largely consumed in the country, it does not occur as an item of merchandise in the English accounts until about 1590. After that date it is entered increasingly—an indication of its later importance. Pork grease is often entered with it, and the following record is interesting as it illustrates the fact that sometimes London caterers

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{31}{32-33}$ .    <sup>2</sup> C.S.P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 108.    <sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{30}{3}$ .

<sup>4</sup> J. Dymmok, *Des. of Ire.*, 1600, Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, 1842, p. 54.



did not despise Irish produce coming via Bristol. "In the Sondaie of Westford of the burthen of 15 tonnes, James Monoughan master from Kinsale. William Swetnam of London fishmonger for five barrells of porck and one barrell of porck grease, Subsidium 6/-."<sup>1</sup> The following Padstow return is more euphemistically expressed. "The George of Portysicke, burden 20 tonnes, Raphe Moyle master, from Corke. The said Master, Inglishe merchant for 300 poundes weighte of pigges morte and 200 weighte of Iryshe wolles."<sup>2</sup> The more usual form of entry is for several "porkes," although early books of the next century commonly record bacon. Thus in 1607 Weymouth boats brought from Carrickfergus, 40 barrels pork at £1 a barrel, and from Cork (then acquiring fame for its pigs) 80 sides of bacon, value £16 13s. 4d., of which the master, Michael Browne, was allowed 8 sides for his provision.<sup>3</sup> This amount, at a comparatively minor and distant port like Weymouth, illustrates the importance of pig meat in the seventeenth century provision trade, and bears out John Dymmoks' remark that the "cuntry yeeldeth great store of beefes and porkes."<sup>4</sup> Robert Payne also recognised the possibilities which the trade offered to colonists and gives a valuable description of the actual facilities for swine keeping. "I find by experience that a man may store 1,000 acres of wood land there for thirtie poundes bestowed in swine, which being wel husbanded wil yield more profite then so much like ground in England of 10/- the acre and £500 stocke, for in the Irish wood landes there is great store of very good pasture and their mast<sup>5</sup> doth not lightlye fayl, their swine wil feede very fat without any

<sup>1</sup> K.R.P.B. 11<sup>31</sup> (March 1st, 1591).

<sup>2</sup> Ib. 10<sup>12</sup> (May 23rd, 1591).

<sup>3</sup> K.R.P.B. Weymouth 2<sup>92</sup> cf. Stat. of 1569, which allowed "beefe" etc. for victualling to be taken out of the realm. Ir. Stat. F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 350.

<sup>4</sup> J. Dymmok, *Des. of Ire.*, 1600, Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, 1842, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Mast—fruit of oak and beech.

meat by hand,"<sup>1</sup> an incidental proof of the wealth of Ireland's natural resources.

If the meat trade was hampered by restrictions intended to keep sufficient stocks in Ireland for supplying the army, so was the corn, and to a greater degree. Moreover, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the heyday of the mercantile system, and corn came within the special scope of its policy. This reacted on Ireland in several ways. Some regulations are expressions of the system in Ireland, i.e. a desire to strengthen the country by keeping supplies at home—others are merely designed to help the government to get army supplies, while others again are supplementary to the enactments in England, licenses, for example. Import into England was forbidden when the price fell under 6/8 a quarter, so that the farmer might reckon on a fair price for his produce, and it was hoped that this encouragement of agriculture might not only keep England self-supporting, but prevent the decline of her rural population which was the backbone of her army. Thus in the Custom's Accounts corn is mentioned both among Ireland's exports and imports, for it was reciprocally exchanged according to the state of the harvests and the prices. After 1534 it could not be sent to England without special licence, hence from that date the appearance of the much-abused system of grants in this commodity. But apart from restrictions on its transportation to England, there is no doubt that Ireland's ability to produce corn for export declined owing to the continued devastation of many of her fairest areas. Thus in the early Middle Ages the transport was so great that a Dublin Parliament of 1319 passed a Statute declaring "a scarcity being *occasioned by the great export of corn into England, Scotland and Wales*, it is enacted that no corn shall be carried out of this kingdom, under pain of forfeiting the corn and

<sup>1</sup> R. Payne, *Des. of Ire.*, in 1589. Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, Vol. I, 1842, p. 13.

ship or boat ; and the buyer of the said corn, with intent of exporting it to pay 4/-.”<sup>1</sup> In 1461 the shipment of wheat corn was forbidden when the price exceeded 10*d.* for the peck of flour and 8*d.* for the peck of corn<sup>2</sup>—a restraint which came into force at intervals during the Tudor period.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, there was still some surplus wheat corn for external trade and the Patent Rolls, etc., record the licenses for export. A permit common for the first few decades after the Act in England of 1534, was for some five or six hundred pecks of corn or other grain.<sup>4</sup>

In 1545 occurs a more elaborate grant when letters were sent from the English Privy Council to the “ Deputie and Counsaill in Irland purporting that Jeffrey Keting, yeoman of the Garde, had enformed that the Realme of Irland was so furnished of grayne as might spare thens a good quantitie, which beeng true they should suffer him to transporte into England within twoo yere foure thousand quarters, taking bonde for discharge and utterance here and not elsewhere ” (Oteland)<sup>5</sup>. But later grants show signs of the growing scarcity and of the difficulty in providing army supplies in the provisos for the means of purchase. Thus in the license to William Kelly (and there were many similar) “ to export to England or elsewhere 60 tons of wheat from Dublin and Drogheda,” was added the clause, “ Provided it be not bought in any common market.”<sup>6</sup> One fact, however, has to be remarked about this transport to England. The English custom’s returns seldom show large entries for Irish corn. But this does not mean that these grants and many others incidentally referred to were not authentic, because corn usually

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 120. Note.      <sup>2</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>3</sup> C. Car. MSS. II, p. 475. Privy Council’s instructions to the Lord Deputy, 1575.

<sup>4</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 120, no. 51 ; p. 123, no. 76 (1546) ; and p. 130, nos. 18, 21, 25 (1547).

<sup>5</sup> Acts of P.C. in Eng., 1542-7, p. 268.

<sup>6</sup> Dep. Keeper Pub. Recs. in Ire. Rep. 12, App. V, p. 33, and cf. pp. 35, 37 and 40 (1570).

formed, as it still forms, what may be termed a bulk cargo, that is, the only commodity on board a vessel which might be sent from some obscure port under a special bond to be handed up at the place of discharge. Hence an entry of the ship was not necessarily made in the Customer's detailed book, although some record would probably appear on the Irish side. This applies especially to particular grants which were more in the nature of personal favours than of pure commerce, as, for instance, that to William Carter of Castleton, to send "into England and Wales all kind of corn, grain and victuals without payment of custom or duty."<sup>1</sup> Such privileges, like those given in connection with wool, although they were doubtless profitable to the recipients, often became an abuse and undid much of the possible good of the statutory attempts to keep provisions in the country. Even Edmund Spenser wished that there should be "no selling of licenses for the transportation of prohibited wares and specially of corn and flesh with many the like."<sup>2</sup>

Some patents were entirely Continental in their application and hence were limited by the prevailing state of international politics. In 1588 John Garland was permitted to export 25 tons of wheat or other grain to any country in amity with the queen, "Inasmuche as (thanks be unto allmightie God) the plentie and store of corne is suche, within this oure Realme of Ireland, as our subiectes here may well spare some convenient quantetie thereof to be transported els where into anny other cuntrie in amytye with us, and there converted and returned hither againe in some other commoditie more scharse and needefull within this our Realme."<sup>3</sup>—a characteristically naive explanation of the fundamental principles of commerce. In the same year Nicholas Walshe, second justice of the Chief

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, *Ire.*, Vol. II, p. 223 (1591).

<sup>2</sup> Spenser, *View of Ire.*, ed. H. Morley, p. 211.

<sup>3</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs. in *Ire. Rep.* 16, App. II, p. 71.



place was similarly allowed to send 260 barrels of his own wheat from Waterford owing to the plenty, especially in Cos. Waterford and Kilkenny,<sup>1</sup> so that evidently 1588 was a prosperous grain producing season for parts of Ireland.<sup>2</sup> Occasionally these grants were made direct to foreign potentates, as in 1590 when the Duke of Florence was given letters from the Queen "to loade 1500 quarters of wheate out of Mounster."<sup>3</sup> But corn was a precious commodity and European governments were anxious to keep account of the transport by taking elaborate records of shipment. The formula for permission to export from Ireland was in general similar to that used in England, and the following enrolment of a bond executed by John Malone and William Purcell of Dublin in 100 marks payable to the Queen, 25 March 1591, is illustrative of the proceedings and of the politics sometimes involved. The condition was "that whereas John Malone of Dublin merchaunte hath loaden aboarde the Ferdinandoe of Dublin whereof Myles Brewet is master under Gode the no. of 50 barrells wheate to be transported herehens unto France yf therefore the said John Malone do transport or cause to be transported any parte or parcell of the said wheate into any parte of Britanye or to any porte or creek in France which are the Kynges of France is enemyes nor to anye of the Kynges adherenses of the Frenche Kynges enemyes in France or in any other place—the said John Malone doe returne a true certificathe to the Customer of Dublin—of the unladinge of all the said grayne from the port of the discharge of the grayne." In this instance, however, the executors declared that the cargo was lost at sea.<sup>4</sup> Evidently there was need for these precautions, though they were very ineffective, and great supplies of corn

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Grain entries at Chester K.R.C.A. 8<sup>5</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>35</sub>.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 15, App. Pt. III, p. 294. (Acts of P.C. in Ireland).

<sup>4</sup> R. I. A. Hal. Coll. Mem. Rolls, Ire., 1383-1643, p. 467.

did illegally get abroad and it was not only the native Irish who sent them. Edmund Palmer wrote to Lord Burghley in 1592 from Bayonne. "If you do not give order in time to the Lord Deputy of Ireland, the Irishmen will altogether feed Spain with grain, saying that they do go for Rochelle and this place (Bayonne) where they have not come this six or seven months. They are for the most part ill members, especially those of Waterford and Cork, those of Develline little better. The trader merchants are the best and most constant."<sup>1</sup> And all this despite the stringent regulations<sup>2</sup> beginning with those of the Irish Privy Council in 1557 which declared: "Forasmuche as it is considered by us, the lord deputy and counsell, that the queenes majesties fortes and other their highness holdes and garizons are disfurnished of necessary provisions, chiefly wheate and other grayne for their present relief—and consideringe agayne what corne heretofore hath gone out of the Englishe Pale into Yrishe mennes countreys and is dayly by diverse as well grey merchantes and others commonly laden and conveyed without lett or restraynt whereby great derth and skarcitie is lyke universally to grow. It is therefore . . . decreed that from hensforth no soche grayne shalbe conveyed, laden or sould out of the saide Englishe Pale into enemy Yrishmans countreye nor yet enny forayne suffred or permitted to come apon mercate dayes or other tymes into anny the townes, villadges or borough townes to buy anny corne but that it shalbe taken as a forfeyte . . ."<sup>3</sup>

As the above extract indicates, with corn even more perhaps than with other victuals, there were three sources of constant annoyance to the English administration—the export abroad, the sale to the rebels, and the scarcity prevalent whenever supplies were

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MS. Comm. MSS. of Marquis of Salisbury, pt. 4, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> cf. pp. 106-07.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 15, App. pt. IV, p. 44.

needed for the troops. It was, indeed, amazing how much corn was shipped abroad even during the worst periods at the end of the century, in spite of Customs' regulations and of proclamations such as the Deputy's in 1589, making the penalty for transportation, death.<sup>1</sup> But, as has already been remarked, the administration could not keep an adequate watch on the coasts, and the tendency to sell wheat and the better grains and to substitute the inferior corns and pulses for food became much stronger as the cesses became more intolerable. It became a deliberate policy to smuggle away as many provisions as possible and so ensure obtaining some price for them. Moreover, as conditions became worse and the production of commodities dwindled, it was probably often necessary to export up to the bare minimum of subsistence in order to provide for some foreign exchange. The following extract from the Students' book on Ireland shows how bad the situation was, even in 1551. "Item, the said shires as often as is thought good by the governours are charged with as much wheate and malte by the name of cesse as he thinks mete for the furniture of his house, victuling of the fortes and soldiers, which charge of cesses began in the tyme of Sir James Croftes and was then but 8 peckes a plough lande but hath since growen . . . to that rate . . . 18 peckes whereof more then the half is wheate the residue malte. The peck wheate con- teyning 16 gallons the peck,<sup>2</sup> malte 18, for the wheate is paid but 4/- the pecke and for the malte but 2/8. The same at the market solde, the wheate at 26/4. The malte at 13/4."<sup>3</sup> So, though some supplies were sent abroad, there was an enormous amount of genuine scarcity at home which was intensified by the reciprocal

<sup>1</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1588-92, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> NOTE.—A Statute of 1570 fixed the Standard Measure for Corn in Ireland at 15 ale gallons for the bushel of wheat, rye, meslone, beans and peas, and 20 ale gallons for the bushel of malt, oats and barley. *Stat. in Ire.*, F. Vesey, 12 Eliz., p. 363.

<sup>3</sup> S.P. Ire., Eliz., Vol. 5, no. 51.

schemes of devastation, the English army cutting down the green corn in their determination that if they could not get the benefit of it, no one else should, and the rebels wasting the country to make it harder to follow them.

It was this process, continuing throughout the wars of the seventeenth century, which helped to turn the Irish into a race of potato-eaters as the potato crop was less easily spoiled and could be left in the ground and dug when required. Fynes Moryson's description of the State of Queen's Co. in 1600 illustrates the policy of devastation which destroyed the original corn-growing tendency of the "savage Irish" when left under native rule. "Our Captains, and by their example (for it was otherwise painful) the common soldiers, did cut down with their swords all the rebel's corn, to the value of 10,000 l. and upwards, the only means by which they were to live, and to keep their Bonnaghts" (or hired soldiers). It seemed incredible, that by so barbarous inhabitants, (as the people of Leix) the ground should be so manured, the fields so orderly fenced, the Townes so frequently inhabited and the high waies and paths so well beaten as the Lord Deputy here found them—the reason whereof was that the Queene's forces during these warres never till then came among them."<sup>1</sup> It was this kind of example which determined Owney Mc'Rory and other chiefs to live on the tillage of others,<sup>2</sup> as is shown by Fynes Moryson's account of Co. Dublin. "This Countie of Dublin is verie fruitfull and yeldeth great plentie of all kindes of cornes; but if the Rebells fear prosecution they burn the corn that the subiect may not have means to relieve the soldiers in the tyme either of prosecution or cessation, whereupon ensueth extream miserie either to the Countrie man, souldier, or both; for the souldiers being for the most part disordered and verie licentious,

<sup>1</sup> F. Moryson, *History of Ire.*, Vol. I, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1600, p. 355.



will violentlie draw from the poor husbandman that which should sustain himself and his Familie and so doth dailie drive him to begg, or if the souldier be restrayned which seldom falleth out, he perisheth for want of Food, of both which these last years hath given infinite example, and it is to be feared that if the Cornes be burnt up this Winter that there will be little sowing or summer corn year, and consequently a dearth and plague, which comonlie followeth dearth, the next year."<sup>1</sup> To such a pass did war reduce the land of which a Papal Legate reported that its fertility was equal to supplying England, France and Spain with bread, and yet leaving enough for itself.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Des. of Ire.*, ed. E. Hogan, pp. 43-4.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Rome, Eliz., Vol. I, p. 390 (1571).

## CHAPTER VIII

### TIMBER, GLASS, OLD PEWTER AND BRASS, AND MISCELLANEA OF EXPORTS

"Then the aforesaid chase was extended and arranged and turned aside by them, under dense groves, hard to know, and under savage waste thickets, and under smooth very beautiful ramparts, and through secret glens, hard to know, and under fair woods, rich in nuts, and through the smooth, very beautiful plains of that same forest."

(*Story of the Crop-Eared Dog*. Ir. Texts Soc., Vol X, ed. R. A. S. Macalister, p. 3).

ONE item of export—namely timber—shows an interesting development during the period. Although Ireland to-day is lacking in forests, it is well known that in the sixteenth century a great part of the country was covered with the magnificent woods which inspired much of the imagery in Spenser's "Faery Queen." Derrick prosaically wrote :

"I there beheld how everie parte and parcell was convaide,  
With hills and woods, and champion ground, most artificiall  
laide,"<sup>1</sup>

while a legate reported to Pope Pius V, "Most beautiful woods whereby ships and galleys can be built in plenty ; these fringe the principal rivers of Cork, Waterford and Wexford, and on any occasion the vessels could be built in large numbers."<sup>2</sup> The woods indeed gave ample protection to the numerous wild animals, as well as to the human rebels, and for the latter reason they caused so much anxiety to the administration that in Leinster, and particularly near Dublin, they were partially cut down. Yet in 1600 Dymmok made a list of the

<sup>1</sup> Derrick, *Image of Ire.*, Somer's Tracts, Vol. I, p. 571.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Rome, Eliz., Vol. I, p. 390 (1571).

"fastness of woode and bogge" in every province of Ireland, and mentioned the following as still belonging to Leinster—"Glandilore" (Glenmalure), "Shilogh" (Shillelagh), Duffrin, "Drones" (Idrone), Leverough, "the great bogge in the King's County called the Tougher" (bog of Allen), Fewes of Kildare, and the woods and bogs of Monasterevan, Gallen, Slievemargy, Rowry and Consteragh.<sup>1</sup>

Nor was it the oak forests which were accounted fastnesses, but the close plantations of hazel and sallies.<sup>2</sup> A "pass" was the road cut through the woods, which in Leix and Offaly (King's and Queen's Co.) covered a remarkably large area. Thus one is described as being three miles long, through a forest of great timber mingled with hazel.<sup>3</sup> From such a wealth of trees there was naturally timber for export, and "burdes de Hibernia" or "Irish boardes" are mentioned in the early accounts. But while they were sent to Bristol in comparatively small consignments, they were transported in proportionately greater quantities to the minor Cornish and Welsh ports, laded principally from Youghal in the former, and from Wexford in the latter case. From the middle of the century the wood was first prepared in Ireland for some of the purposes for which it was required. In addition to boards or *tabulæ* and clapholt, (small pieces of split oak for cask staves), there were great and small beams, rafters, laths, ingle and clave boards, oars and oar blades, ship planks, many pipe staves, some halbert and hop staves, and poles. Thus for Bristol in 1492 are entries for 535 boards and 350 ship boards at £1 per 100, the average price for the period;<sup>4</sup> and in 1558 for 1,000 clapholt (£2 10s. 0d.) and 12 oars (8/-),<sup>5</sup> while to the Cornish ports of St. Ives, Fowey, Penzance and Padstow in 1505 were brought 2,633 boards.<sup>6</sup> The change by the end of the

<sup>1</sup> J. Dymmok, *Des. of Ire.*, 1600. Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, 1842, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> H. F. Hore, "Notes on a Facsimile of an ancient map of Leix, etc.," *Kilk. Arch. Journal*, Vol. IV, 1862-3, p. 348.

<sup>3</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1548, pp. 89-90.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 20.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Ib. 115.

century is marked. In 1587, at the same Cornish ports, timber only is entered, consisting of 512 boards (£5 10s. *od.*) 48 great beams (£5), 47 small (£2 10s. *od.*), and 78 oar ends (£3 5s. *od.*) brought from Youghal and Wexford.<sup>1</sup> During six months of 1586 more varied cargoes were consigned from Wexford and Ross to Milford and Cardiff, including 200 boards (£2), 2,000 laths (10/-), 12 "drawgh" timber (2/6), 24 small timber (5/-), 100 hopstaves, 100 poles, and 12 oar blades (each for 6/8).<sup>2</sup> The following is a characteristic boatload: "June 11<sup>o</sup>. In the Saviour of Wexford burthen 6 tonnes whereof Rychard Morrow, Master and merchant from Ireland to Mylford. In primis for 100 of boardes. Value 20/-. Subsidy 1/-. Item, one thousand of lathes. Value 5/-. Subsidy 3*d*. Item, one dozen of draugh timber. Value 2/6. Subsidy 1½*d*." <sup>3</sup>

The above remarks apply only to a small portion of the trade, for there was also much of which vaguer evidence alone is left. Boards for building galleys were sent in large quantities to Scotland, and since the Scots were thereby provided with vessels to come and "disturb the peace of Ireland" transportation was at times restricted, especially from certain ports. In 1568 the Lords Justices forbade boards to be taken out of Wexford, Carrickfergus and Knockfergus, in order to prevent the Earl of Argyle from making galleys.<sup>4</sup> An account of the traffic about 1600 shows how it had then become rather more difficult to control. "The Scots, if unable to support themselves in their own country, come over here and disturb the peace of Ireland, encouraging those that are willing to rebel. The timber of which their gallies are made comes chiefly from Wexford, Wicklow, and Arklow. The men of these places either sell their timber directly to the Scottish merchants, or, if they fail, sell to merchants in Dublin, who 'trock' the same to the Scottish merchants for Scotland. Some timber is

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* 118, 119, 121, 122.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 109.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 124.

<sup>4</sup> *C. S. P. Ire.*, 1509-73, pp. 385-7.



sent to Carlingford and Carrickfergus to be sold but not so much as in Dublin. It is easier for the Scots to get timber from Ireland, than from their own isles."<sup>1</sup>

A Galway Corporation statute of 1579 laments the drain on local supplies and the rise in prices at home which resulted from the large exportations of "greene and highe timber," especially to Spain. They ordered that "no kynd of such tymber be ladden or transported oute of this towne to any forren coutry or reallmis" upon pain of forfeiture, and forbade any license to the contrary, "salfe only fuell of wood for fyre and the present wannte of repayring of the shippis, barques or boates, at our haven and not elsewhere."<sup>2</sup> Writing in 1601 Fynes Moryson gives one interesting reason for the popularity of Irish timber abroad, for he asserts that the wood transported for building was supposed to be free of spiders and their webs. The claim to complete immunity was an exaggeration, but it must have been fairly free, for Moryson also declares that in general he saw very few spiders in Irish timber.<sup>3</sup> But the wood resources of the country were not really exploited till the end of the century, when the unlikelihood of their being exhausted was pointed out to the Elizabethan colonists. As has already been remarked, it was not the cutting down of portions for purposes of industry and commerce, or the stripping of oak bark for local tanning, which was responsible for their spoliation, but many fine forest areas all over the country, and especially in Munster, were wasted either by the Queen's or the rebels' armies in the wars. In the seventeenth century the process of destruction was continued and accelerated by the number of smelting forges worked by wood. Some of the planters, among them the Boyles and Carews,

<sup>1</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1601-3, p. 667.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 10, p. 430 note. Galway had many creeks incorporated with it nearer the coast. Timber might be taken to them.

<sup>3</sup> F. Moryson, *Des. of Ire.*, ed. H. Morley, p. 423. cf. tradition that St. David's Cathedral in Wales was free of spiders in its woodwork.

made large sums of money out of the timber on their estates, both for ironworks and export. The following entry at Padstow shows a cargo sent by a member of the latter family: "The John of Padstowe, burthen 20 tonnes, Jo. Luynt master from Youghall. Robert Carewe gent. an undertaker in Monster in Ireland near Lishmore dothe enter in the same, her whoole ladinge of tymber, yngle boardes and shippe planckes."<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately the value column is missing, but judging from the tonnage of the vessel, the wood was probably worth about £18—not such a small sum in those days, and also the declared price for custom was wholesale rather than retail. Robert Payne in 1589 when reporting on Ireland for the benefit of prospective English undertakers, describes the potential resources of the woods. "There is much good timber in manye places, and of that streightnesse and so good to reave, that a single workeman with a Beake axe will cleave a greate oke to boardes of less than one ynche thicke, 14 ynches broad and 15 footes in length, such a board there is usually sold for 2½*d.*" Later he said of the district round Bandon: "In this countrie is greate woodes, the trees of wonderful length which sheweth the excellent fruitfulnessse of the soyle."<sup>2</sup>

One of the most enterprising of these Munster undertakers was Sir Walter Raleigh, and he obtained a patent for the export of pipe staves in large quantities. As early as 1551 the Privy Council advised the ordnance in Ireland to watch the supplies for arming purposes and for "the provision of bowstaves of the yewe there growing in the realme and of shaftes, chasing staves, pikes, elems for plankes . . . & such other thinges belonging to that office as further as the same be had or gotten within that realme."<sup>3</sup> But about 1590 Raleigh formed a company, which not only transported many

<sup>1</sup> K.R.P.B. 1017 under date 24th July, 1591.

<sup>2</sup> R. Payne, *Des. of Ire.*, in 1589. Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, Vol I, pp. 6 and 11.

<sup>3</sup> S. P. Ire., Ed. VI, Vol. III, no. 70.

pipe staves to "the Islands" (Canary, etc.), but undertook to prepare ship planks for the Navy. In the latter venture he was following up the suggestion made in a "Discourse for the Reformation of Ireland" in 1583. This emphasised the want of timber in England for the Navy, and declared that it could be abundantly supplied in Ireland, especially from such fit places for shipbuilding as "Cork, Yowghull, Wexford, and Belfast."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, despite this advice, Raleigh's enterprise was interfered with by the orders restraining the export of wood, lest it should go to build Spanish vessels. There are three documents in this connection which throw some interesting side lights on the whole traffic and explain the position which it assumed in the next century in the trade with the West Indies, whose merchants ordered most of the barrel timber they required from Ireland.<sup>2</sup> In asking for a license the Lords of the Council told Burghley that the undertakers only took the pipe staves to the islands where English subjects were well treated, and that there returned boats with wine and other commodities both for England and Ireland. Further, that though it might be imagined that Spain thus benefited, it had to be remembered that great quantities were brought to Spain from Norway, etc., and stay had often been made in Ireland of them, but had been released again, whereby the countries were plentifully served. Therefore they saw no reason why Raleigh and his company should not be licensed, especially as the project served for "the relief of so many families now planted in that part of the realm," and might be spared in large numbers without prejudice, "so as care be had that no planks or other kinds of timber meet for building of ships be under colour thereof transported."<sup>3</sup> Raleigh himself explained to Burghley that they had many barrel and hogshead boards ready cut and made up, "which, for want of venting . . . will rot." He

<sup>1</sup> C. Car. MSS., II, p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1608-10, p. 530.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. MSS., Comm. MSS. of Marquis of Salisbury, pt. 4, p. 278.

pleaded the loss to Munster if able workers had to be taken back to England, and stressed the fact of the demand for these boards by western English merchants,<sup>1</sup> and he proposed to furnish bonds that they should only be shipped to England.<sup>2</sup> But perhaps the most valuable paper is a general note on the trade which gives certain particulars. "The merchants of Waterford, Washeford, etc., have long sent pipe staves to the King of Spain's countries without any restraint. Sir Walter Raleigh, Henry Pyne, and their partners have transferred only pipe staves and no other commodities. There have been transported in these three years about 340,000 pipe staves, laden in 12 ships, the trees whereof they were made, there to be sold, were not worth £40, and yet her Majesty hath received in custom by 2 ships returned from the Canaries, above £300, and by the ships laden by others £600 or £700. Out of the woods of Moggeleygee and Kilcoran where this timber hath been felled, there hath not been taken the hundreth tree . . . The wrought timber is carried by horse and on men's backs, to 'our' extreme charge. The undertakers . . . have disbursed above £5,000 whereof there is not returned one half, Her Majesty having granted 14 years free liberty for transporting wares encouraged them to enter on this extreme charge. These works maintain there above 200 persons, besides the great benefit it bringeth to the inhabitants in Lismore, Tallowe, Corryglass and Mogely, being all or the most part English. The loss of the planks sawn for the service of Her Majesty's Navy and there stayed . . . exceedeth £200."<sup>3</sup> And therefore license was craved, for even the English interest in Ireland had to fight hard against crushing regulations. From all this scattered information it would appear that timber was certainly not a negligible export, at least in Irish foreign trade.

<sup>1</sup> Incidentally evidenced in the Custom's Accounts for the Cornish ports.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. MSS. of Marquis of Salisbury, pt. 4, p. 332.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 464.



An industry very dependent on timber was the making of glass, and though rarely exported as early as this, the evidences of the beginning of the trade are valuable, if only for their reference to the consumption of wood. In 1589 Captain Thomas Woodhouse obtained an eight-year monopoly for the making of glass for glazing, drinking, and all other uses, provided he paid the same customs as merchants who brought it into England from abroad. He was also to compound with unlicensed makers "so that all manner of glass may be made in Ireland at as small rates as the like made in foreign parts."<sup>1</sup> Though largely imported into Ireland, evidently even before Woodhouse's patent, there was some local enterprise, and a few years later a more impressive project was mooted by George Longe. He claimed to have first introduced glass manufacture into Ireland, and pointed out to the Queen that foreigners had early in her reign been licensed to make various kinds in England, on condition that they paid customs as if it were imported, and instructed Englishmen in the process of manufacture, but that they had not fulfilled either condition and that the limit set had expired. He therefore asked for a similar privilege for George Stone in Ireland; and for the suppression of unlicensed strangers in England. This, he declared, would benefit the Exchequer by the amount of customs paid if brought from Ireland to England, and by giving employment to carry wood, burn ashes, dig sand, clay, etc., and in the intercourse for transportation. England would, moreover, get better and cheaper glass owing to the facilities for manufacture which existed in Ireland. He laid great stress on preserving the English woods and on the impossibility of destroying the Irish "continually growing again," and gave as an illustration the fact that for ten years he had kept a glass house in Dumfrenning woods and still there was "no sign of waste, only the ways more passable . . . By difference of the price

<sup>1</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs. in Ire. Fiants, Rep. 16, App. 2, p. 107.

of wood, farm, victuals, etc., honest gain may be had to perform this without preying upon the Commonwealth.”<sup>1</sup> The Port Books give an interesting corroboration of his first statement, for as early as 1591 the following entry occurs at Padstow: “The John of Padstow . . . John Luynt master from Youghall. George Longe Inglishe merchant dothe enter in the same, 6 chestes and a halfe of Bourgony glasse. Value £13 os. 0d. Subsidy 13/-.”<sup>2</sup> Nor is this the only instance of glass exported in that year, for at Bristol is recorded, “In the Marie of Bristol, of the burthen of 18 tonnes, Mathew Honylaw master from Waterford. Christopher Burcott of Bristol sailor for three cases of glas. Subsidy 3/-.”<sup>3</sup> (i.e. value £3). The latter illustration may refer to some other patentee’s works, but it indicates that glass was beginning to be an item of export from about 1590 and the later accounts show steady, if scattered entries of a similar kind. Moreover, Longe’s patent indicates that it was during this period that the foundation of the great Waterford and Cork industries were laid—on the basis of the country’s natural timber resources.

The latter part of the sixteenth century shows the development of a rather curious class of exports, namely old pewter and brass. It will be seen from the imports that there was a fair demand in Ireland for such non-ferreous metals, both unwrought and prepared as utensils for cooking and domestic purposes. The method of manufacture is indicated in the term “battry,” (i.e. metal, or articles of metal, especially of brass or copper wrought by hammering) by which the import is collectively described early in the century, while later the Accounts record pewter, pan, pot, and crock brass. Since such a process left little scope for the employment of alloys, the pure metal offered ample opportunities for re-manufacture, and this seems to have been realised

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS. Comm. MSS. of Marquis of Salisbury, pt. VII, p. 530 (1597).

<sup>2</sup> K.R.P.B. 1017 23rd September.      <sup>3</sup> Ib. 113 2nd November.

about 1570, for after that date old pewter and brass were increasingly returned to Chester, Milford, and Cardiff. This was perhaps partly due to more importation, and possibly also to greater fastidiousness on the part of the Anglo-Irish residents. Certainly in the early accounts no scrap battery is mentioned, while during the first half of the year 1585 about 2,300 lbs. of old brass and pewter and "2 lose brass pots" were sent to Chester (mainly from Dublin), the average declared value being £1 6s. 8d. per 100lbs.<sup>1</sup> Though usually entered together, sometimes the old brass is put separately, showing a higher average value, but the rates are irregular and must have been dependent on the condition of the metal sent. Thus at Cardiff in 1587, 200lbs. of the mixed scrap was recorded for £3 6s. 8d.;<sup>2</sup> at Milford in 1586, 300lbs. of scrap brass only, for £5 os. 0d.<sup>3</sup> Assuredly the quantities sent to Chester show that it provided a fairly profitable item of merchandise, and the traffic is also interesting as an early example of such an export to England, which still continues, though now confined to the baser materials, iron and steel, as becomes the hasty industrialism of the twentieth century, and a more stinted employment of the rarer metals for articles of domestic use.

Finally must be mentioned the small, if miscellaneous class comprising the re-exports. These are difficult to enumerate owing to their variety, but share one natural characteristic—that of a foreign origin—and consist of commodities such as appear in the Irish consignments from England, or on the bills of lading of vessels coming from the Continent. As such supplies commanded a market in both countries, it is not unusual to find an Irish export entry showing with the usual fish and hides, spices, or other alien products, despite the fact that other vessels bound for Ireland the same day might be taking back similar goods.

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. Chester 1585, 1586. <sup>2</sup> Ib., Cardiff 1587.

<sup>3</sup> Ib., Milford and Cardiff 1586.

Wine, especially French wine, was one of the commonest items of re-export. This was doubtless due to the enormous Irish import of liquor direct from the Continent, of which the amount sent on to England constituted a very small proportion. At Bristol and Chester entries for so many *dollia* (tuns) or *pipæ vini* occur fairly regularly early in the period, and there are in addition more specific instances, such as the following, showing the traffic in Gascony and Rochelle wines: "30th day of December. Enters the Peter of Waterford of which Nicholas Pyret is the Master under God.—merchant, Peter Dallyn—8 tuns and pipes of Gascon wine." The same fragmentary Chester Account for 1531 records two further similar shipments<sup>1</sup> and a Port Book belonging to the dependent creek of "Bewmaris" contains consistent evidence for the year 1565. John Sparrowe, of Waterford, transported among other goods "7 tonnes Gascoigne wyne, 6 tonnes sakes" in the "Larke of Waterfurde," William Hope of Dublin "onne tonne sakes" (subsidy 3/-) in the "Eyle of Helbreg," and Richard Roche four tuns of Rochelle wines. The declarations were made according to the following elaborate formula, which, as well as the subsidy, might well have tempted traders to avoid the Custom's House! "Richarde Roche, merchant of Waterforde in Ireland, came here in the Custome Howse of our soveraigne Lady the Queen for the towne of Beomarres and hathe entered 4 tonnes Rochelle wyne being the proper goodes of the said Richard Roche and transported in a pycarde called the Margaret of Waterfurde, master the forenamed Richard Roche and is of the burthen of 8 tonnes, marked with his mark (as in the margin)—subsidy 7s."<sup>2</sup> An example of an early date (1521) which is to be found in the Memoranda Rolls suggests that probably illegal re-export was not uncommon, although most merchants cannot have been as unfortunate as Walter Kelly of Dublin against whom information was given in Court that he "at

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 31 A.      <sup>2</sup> K.R.P.B. 1323.



Clontarff on the 3rd of July 12 Henry 8, in a ship called the Laurans of Pyryake exported 14 hogshedes of gascony wine worth £10, without entry in the Customer's book, and without seeking a billett," for which breach of the Act of 15 Henry VII, (granting Customs to the King), he was compelled to pay £7.<sup>1</sup> Most of the inferior kinds of foreign wine were brought to Ireland from England, but some times this "corrupt" liquor was consigned the opposite way—as when a Youghal boat took to Bridgewater in 1560 "2 hogshedes of vini corrupti de France."<sup>2</sup>

Salt—frequently sent on from England—also occurs as an appreciable Irish re-export, particularly the French or "baie salte" of Rochelle, for which that town was famous. Thus in 1560 part of the cargo which "le Jesus de Yogholl" carried to Bridgewater included "syxe waies sallis de Franciaë," value £6, subsidy 6/-, and during that year three weys were shipped there from the various Munster ports.<sup>3</sup> Simon Mydelton's fragmentary ledger records that in April, 1586, there came the "Margaret of Lacharn burthen 20 tonnes whereof Hugh Wyllyn master and merchant from Ireland to Mylford," with seven tons of bay salt, value £7, and subsidy the customary one twentieth.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the existence of a successful direct Irish-French trade at the beginning of the sixteenth century is evidenced not only in the re-shipment of Gascony wine or Rochelle salt, but also in that of Brittany cloth. Later accounts do not show this so extensively, but in 1505 Bristol imported a not inconsiderable amount of Brittany linen and canvas via Waterford, Wexford and Cork. This may be illustrated by a quotation from the Bristol Custom's Account of that year. On the *penultimo die Augusti* the "Sondaie de Waterford," with John Walshe as master, came from Ireland with 50 hake, 2 mantles, and 50 *panni linei Britanniaë*, (i.e. 50 whole rolls of linen

<sup>1</sup> R. I. A. Hal. Coll. Mem. Rolls, 1383-1643, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 23. <sup>3</sup> Ib., 12th November. <sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 124.

cloth) value 10/-, subsidy 6*d*. These goods were all Irish owned, the same John Walsh being the merchant exporter, and the entry, although that of a very small boat, is typical of several others in the same document.<sup>1</sup>

Spices were distributed to Europe through the agencies of Spain and Portugal—jealous harvesters of the produce of their colonial possessions—and Irish boats are not unknown to have included pepper, ginger, mace, nutmegs, cloves, almonds, graines, and cinnamon among the outgoing cargoes, though more rarely than in those returning from England. For the year 1559-60 such spices among the Irish merchandise landed at Bristol amounted in value to £25.<sup>2</sup> The re-export of Newfoundland fish has already been mentioned, and its indication of Ireland's place in the seventeenth century carrying trade with the western colonies, has been pointed out, while late sixteenth century bills of lading show other examples of the transport of the newer foreign goods—salsiperilla,<sup>3</sup> prunes, white sugar, "civill oyle," (oil from Seville), olives<sup>4</sup> and even marmalade and succade. For instance, amongst the entries for the contents of the "Mathew of Newnam of the burthen of 20 tons, William Swanle master from Waterford," discharged at Bristol March 1st, 1591, are the following: "Nicholas Morone of Clonmell, merchant, for one hamper contayning one hundred and a quarter of marmeled and succade, subsidy 4/9," and Thomas Cranesborough of Waterford, merchant . . . for one chest of succade and marmeled."<sup>5</sup>

There is one distinction which may be borne in mind when considering these re-exports. Some were merely goods in transit, and as such must have affected Irish trade only so far as they benefited the shipping industry. This is occasionally obvious from the foreign names of the consignors; but more often the Custom's Accounts afford insufficient data to make it clear. As the re-exports constituted a small proportion of the whole Irish traffic,

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 199.    <sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 24.  
<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 24, Bristol, 1590.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A., Bridgewater 39-40, 1591.    <sup>5</sup> K.R.P.B. 1131.

the distinction is not important in this case, but the loss is felt when dealing with the Irish imports from England. These were nearly all, technically, English re-exports, and it would be interesting to know how far they were genuinely so ; as they must have been to a great extent. However, this is a matter which is not always distinguished even in modern times, when of some actual importance, owing to the misconceptions arising when a large proportion of the goods, classified in the Official Statistics of some countries as re-exports, are in point of fact only goods in transit.

## CHAPTER IX

### IMPORTS

#### WINE

"At Dublin and in some cities they have taverns wherein Spanish and French wines are sold, but more commonly the merchants sell them by pints and quarts in their own cellars. The Irish aqua vitae, vulgarly called usquebaugh, is held the best in the world of that kind, which is made also in England, but nothing so good as that which is brought out of Ireland."—F. Moryson, *Des. of Ire.*, ed. H. Morley, p. 425.

IRISH imports in the Custom's Accounts are distinguishable at a glance from the real exports. This is natural as they consisted almost entirely of luxuries, like the re-exports, and so exhibit an infinite, and continually changing variety. As Irish industries made little progress it was necessary to obtain many small goods from England or abroad, and the development in English civilisation during the century is reflected in the merchandise transported for the comfort of the Anglo-Irish residents. There is also another distinction of importance. Ireland's exports were almost entirely genuine home products (the re-exports already enumerated bearing only a very small relation to the total trade), whereas the imports from England were largely re-exports of that country. This, again, was natural, as they were goods which England also sought from the Continent, but the fact helped to embitter commercial relations. Early in the sixteenth century Ireland was in a fortunate position, because she was exporting the commodities which were in general demand, while she herself required only a very few necessities. With the balance of trade in her favour she got these imports on



favourable terms. English merchants knew that she depended little on their native goods and they resented the success of Irish and of foreigners in Continental trade. This has been illustrated in connection with the export of fish and hides and the resultant traffic. It is also illustrated by many of the imports, and therefore the Tudor mercantile policy of the latter half of the century aimed at establishing a monopoly for English merchants in this trade in foreign products.

Among the luxuries of Continental origin, mainly brought in the course of direct trade to Ireland, were wines and other species of liquor. These formed by far the most important, if not the most vital items of import. Indeed, the enormous quantities of liquor consumed in Ireland were even then considered remarkable. Dymmok and other writers ascribed this to climatic conditions. "The cuntry lyeth very low, and therefore watrish and full of marishes, boggs and standing pooles, even in the highest mountaynes, which causeth the inhabitants, but especially the sojourners there, to be very subiect to rheumes, catarrs and fluxes for remedy whereof they drinke great quantity of hott wyne, especially sackes and a kind of aqua vitae, more dryinge and less inflamyng, than that which is made in England."<sup>1</sup> Possibly his reason was correct and certainly his observation is endorsed by all accounts of the households of native chiefs. "Shane O'Neill had most commonlie 200 tunnes of wine in his cellar at Dungannon," Hooker records in *Holinshed* and Egan O'Rahilly celebrated O'Callaghan's generosity in the following verses :

"Wines, newly-opened being drunk and jollity,  
Viands on spits, and uisquebaugh on tables

Every moment fresh casks being opened for the multitude,  
While there was no ebb in the liquid that came into that  
drinking feast."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. Dymmok, *A Treatise of Ireland*, 1600. Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, 1842, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Irish Texts Society. Vol. III, pp. 71-73.

The great quantities of fish and hides sold to Spain and France, when not exchanged for arms, were largely paid for in wines. Throughout the State Papers there are instances of this, casual references, such as that in a letter of the Mayor of Cork to Sir Edward Bellyngham, during the year 1548, in which he mentions the arrival of a big ship at Kinsale, from St. Malo, going to Galway with wine, and to take away 15 lasts of hides.<sup>1</sup> Wine was thus obtained on easy terms mainly direct from the Continent, and according to English visitors was sold at a moderate rate. Stephen ap Harry reported to Cromwell how he went from Dungarvan to Youghal, "where we had very good cheer and where they sold a gallon of Gascon wine for 4*d*. sterling."<sup>2</sup> (1535). Plenty was accompanied by cheapness, certainly till the latter part of the century.

Naturally an import of such magnitude was considered a lucrative source of taxation--witness the lengthy controversy over the grant of the right to the prise wines to the Earl of Ormond--and the transportation was subject to various regulations designed for the benefit of the revenue. The tax known as tonnage, levied on each tun or vat of wine, was a valuable one in Ireland as in England, and its collection was partly achieved through the work of the gauger, who assessed the wines brought into port for taxation. Incidentally his scrutiny tended to check misrepresentation by any importer of the quality of his liquor. The office was lucrative and the Patent Rolls contain a regular series of the grants of appointment, usually combined with the supplementary duty of searcher. As might be expected, merchants were occasionally anxious to evade examination and there is an illustration of this in a Dublin lawsuit recorded in the Memoranda Rolls for the year 1497. "And whereas it is established and ordained that no person shall sell any red or white wines within

<sup>1</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 80 (1548).

<sup>2</sup> C. Car. MSS., I, p. 76.

the aforesaid land unless they shall be first gauged by the Searcher or his Deputy. . . . Notwithstanding this Robert Forster of Dublin, merchant, at his pleasure sold 16 pipes of Gascony wine, and 10 pipes of Rochelle wine, John Bekket of the same merchant sold 20 pipes of Rochelle wine, and Nicholas Herbart of the same merchant sold 20 pipes of Rochelle wine without being gauged," whereupon their issues were forfeited to the King.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, however, the law was not enforced so easily and the Rolls for the year 1568 afford an instance of a less peaceful character. Lawrence Cace, deputy searcher for the Port of Dublin at "Merchants' Key," arrested two pipes of sack (price £12 os. od. each) the goods of Henry Cusack, a Dublin merchant, because he exposed them for sale to "Henry Baghe, of Chester, mariner, and others," before they were gauged, and so acted contrary to the Statute. When Cace had taken possession of the wines "Henry Cusack and other malefactors associated with him rescued the Wine from him and carried it away."<sup>2</sup>

About 1569 a stringent effort was made to augment the revenue by heavier duties on wine and among the State Papers is an abstract outlining the regulations, sent by the Queen.<sup>3</sup> The proposed legislation naturally met with opposition from the merchants whose interests were threatened and an attempt was made to persuade the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sydney, to have it withdrawn. When recounting his services in Ireland to Sir Francis Walsingham, he declared, "I might have had £2,000 sterling in ready gold to have opposed the Act respecting the Custom for wines,"<sup>4</sup> but he refused the bribe and the Statute entitled "An Act for bringing in of wines discharging, rating, and Customs" was duly passed by the Irish Parliament later in the same year. This Statute contains the customary elaborate explana-

<sup>1</sup> R. I. A. Hal. Coll. Mem. Rolls., 1383-1643, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> R. I. A. Hal. Coll. Mem. Rolls., 1383-1643, p. 343.

<sup>3</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 400 (1569).

<sup>4</sup> C. Car. MSS., II, p. 350.

tions ; and although the preamble cannot be accepted altogether literally it is of considerable interest. The Commons lament " the great lack of a navie in this realm, which is occasioned by the sluggardly idleness and untowardness of the merchants and traffiquers thereof, and how by default this realm is brought to be of no abilitie or strength to defend itself against the enemies, pyrates and rovers . . . and calling to memorie divers intollerable enormities that have followed of the disordered trade of aliens to creeks and unhaunted points and places of this realm, leaving the chief cities, boroughs, townes and ports of defence whereby the realm is weakened . . . loss of customs . . . Minishing of revenue . . . and weying by long experience how that by the superfluous abundance of wines that are yearly discharged within this realm, grievous decay of tyllage, and husbandrie, idleness the mother of all vices . . . besides the great spoyle of subiects goods that hath followed, by reason that no provision hath been hitherto made for the seal of the same wines that are so conveyed and brought into this realm . . . be it enacted . . . that no manner of person . . . subiect, denizen or alien, shall discharge any maner wines within this realm of Ireland, but onely within the havens and ports of the cities, towns and places hereafter mentioned, videlicet, the cities of Dublin, Waterford, Corke and Limerick, the townes and places of Drogheda, Galway, Yoghall, Carrickfergus, Wexford, Rosse in the Co. of Wexford, Kingsale, Dongarvan, Dundalke, Carlingford, Sligo, and Dingle Husey otherwise called Dingle I. Cough and in no other creek etc. without special licence . . . on pain of forfeiture." Exception was made in case of shipwreck, sale for purpose of repairs or when specially licensed. The custom or subsidy imposed " for increase of the revenue and to stay the said superfluity of wines " was 40/- Irish for every tun of Spanish or Levant wines brought by way of merchandise in any ship of subjects, " and of every tunne of wine growen in Fraunce, Guyen,



Gascoigne or Rochelle . . . £1 6s. 8d. Irish." The rates when transported in foreign vessels were four marks and 40/- respectively. The Lord Deputy was permitted a yearly provision custom free, of 20 tuns, and could limit what every peer and councillor should similarly have—assuredly another corrupting form of license.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately only fragmentary records of the actual accounts for this impost survive, and as much of the available evidence about the wine trade is of a general character, definite information is particularly valuable. Among the State Papers dated the 23rd April, 1571, is a "briefe note of all suche somes of money as hath bene reseruede and paid in ready money to her Majestie's use of the Custome of thimport of wyne . . . Book of the Augmentation of the Queen's revenue by the impost on wines. The custome of Impostes for one whole yeare ending at Michaelmas 1570, Dublin £711 16s. 0d., Drougheda £154 5s. 4d., Waterforde £200 10s. 8d., Rosse £8 8s. 8d., Cork £340 0s. 0d., Wexforde £30 0s. 0d., Lymerick £400 0s. 0d., Galwaye £127 16s. 8d.—£2472 2s. 8d. summa in compoto Thesauri."<sup>2</sup>

This account did not include all the varieties of foreign wines imported, and the returns appear to have decreased during the next ten years. Fyton's Accounts show that £1,985 14s. 7½d. was raised for the year 1573, but only £670 17s. 11¼d. in 1574 and £837 4s. 7½d. in 1575.<sup>3</sup> In addition allowance must be made for the quantities smuggled in free, and it is also probable that these figures do not represent the whole amounts passing through the Customer's hands. The tax was farmed out, and judging from the general eagerness to acquire the farm, more was received than these returns imply. According to Robert Legge's book of information for the reformation of the Civil Government the lessees

<sup>1</sup> *Stat. in Irish Parls.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, pp. 353-4.

<sup>2</sup> *S. P. Ire.*, Eliz., Vol. 32, no. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Car. MSS.*, II, p. 27. The tax, however, was still valuable, for the sum of £837 4s. 7½d. was out of a total of £10,996. (*Ib.* p. 35).

profitted disproportionately. "Her Majesty loses, by letting out certain offices here, as her Customs and impost of wines, a great matter yearly,"<sup>1</sup> and as the officials and merchants kept very insufficient entries there was no proper machinery for checking statements. In 1580 Lord Justice Pelham in his *Plot of Munster* reported that the Collection, in the Queen's interests, was lax, and he advised the renewal of the statute by Parliament, "and some defects holpen that were in the act expired, concerning the great quantities of aqua vitæ, bastards and Canary wines, brought in to the realm."<sup>2</sup> He calculated that in Munster "the imports of wine rise to the sum of £1,000 by the year, and that 1,000 tuns of Spanish wines are brought yearly into that province."<sup>3</sup> Possibly it was in accordance with his advice that the statute was re-enacted in 1586 with some additional clauses. One of these was framed to aid the convenience of merchants and allowed four months time after entry of the ship and wine for payment of the impost upon sufficient bond and surety.<sup>4</sup> Several, however, were mainly concerned in protecting the vested interests of the various lessees of the tax, notably the rights of Henry Broncard and Sir Nicholas Bagnall.<sup>5</sup> The Fiants for the year 1582 give particulars of several such leases. Thus Andrew Creaghe Fitz James and Stephen White Fitz Dominick rented the impost on wines coming to Limerick and havens for a year at £520.<sup>6</sup> Richard Strange and John Loker similarly obtained the Waterford and Rosse haven rights for £700,<sup>7</sup> and Edmund Frenche and Anthony Lynche Fitz Marks

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* p. 399 (1584).      <sup>2</sup> C. Car. MSS., II, p. 285.      <sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> In 1580 the Lord Justice and Council wrote to the Privy Council "The impost which is the most certain revenue here, although the Act be expired, is never answered here until Michaelmas, because that merchants look for long days of payment, or else would not continue their trade, for they must first vent their wines before they can pay their collector." (C. Car. MSS., II, p. 242).

<sup>5</sup> *Stat. in Irish Parls.* F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 410.

<sup>6</sup> Dep. Keeper Recs. in Ire., Dublin, 1881. Fiants. Eliz. Rep. 13, App. IV, p. 196.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* p. 197.

those of Galway for £100.<sup>1</sup> In the following years Robert Coppinger rented the Cork tax for £500<sup>2</sup> and Thomas Duff and Thomas Whyt those of Drogheda and Dundalk for £200.<sup>3</sup> These leases are of interest for several reasons. They indicate that the above-named merchants were men of substance and bear out the evidence of the Custom's Accounts and Port Books where their names are frequently found, while the amounts of the rentals are useful for comparison with the account for 1570, especially in view of the allegations made by Robert Legge (pp. 137-8). Sir N. Bagnall's grant was rather different. It was obtained in 1582 and ran for twelve years, so, although the rent only brought in £10 per annum it was specifically protected in the statute of 1586. The rights applied only to the wines discharged in Carlingford for *bona fide* sale in the town and district, but not for transport southwards.<sup>4</sup>

The lease to Sir Henry Broncard is, however, of special importance, because it can be traced up to the year 1600 and the documents connected with it throw some light on the vicissitudes of the trade up to that date. In 1584 he took over a lease of the Irish impost at a rent of £2,000 sterling per annum, but according to a memorandum in the Patent Rolls for 1594 the official certificates of his receipts (prepared for the Queen) seldom registered that sum. But as he renewed his offer for a further period of twelve years at the same rent, he apparently made, or still hoped to make, some profit from it. The memoranda also gives instructions for the working of the grant, including an attempt to provide for the checking of the lessee's returns—"our said servant, and his assigns, shall suffer one of our officers in every port or place where wines are usually brought and unladen, or like to be, to keep a book of entries with him or his deputy, of every several quantity of wine so brought in

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 218.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 179.

at one or sundry times, with a clause also that we may revoke this demise at any time during the aforesaid years when we shall think convenient." A reminder of the contemporary political issues is contained in another proviso that "if any breach or stay of the intercourse between our realms of England and Ireland, or the countries of the French King and of the King of Spayne do happen, at any time, during the above said yeares, whereby the trade of bringing in of wines to our realm should be impeached so as less quantity be brought in ; in that case the said Henry Broncard and his assigns shall be accountable . . . only upon his or their oath and so to be charged to answer us."<sup>1</sup> A later notice of the grant illustrates the depression in the country by the end of the century. In 1600 the rent was lowered to £1,400 per annum because the import for several years had fallen far below the £2,000 level,<sup>2</sup> and although some weight must be attached to the factor of successful illicit trading,<sup>3</sup> still Broncard's description of the decline in the wine traffic must be accepted as genuine. The prohibitions and regulations resulting from a state of war with France and Spain were partially sufficient to account for a diminution in the official returns of the impost. In this connection there is rather a significant explanation of the Spanish policy towards Irish merchants in 1601. Sir George Carew wrote to Sir R. Cecil: "I understand that the late great embarque of all nations in South Spain is released, but most part or a great part of their goods confiscated. The Irish only are detained and their goods in the King's possession, and their ships are stayed ; yet nevertheless many are come home that had hired French or Scottish ships, and under the colour of those nations have stolen their goods away. But all the rest of this nation that had their merchandise in their own ships stand yet confiscated. The cause of

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. II, pp. 393-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 542.

<sup>3</sup> In 1589 the merchants of Waterford were fined £300 for trading without licence into Spain. (C. S. P. Ire., 1588-92, p. 280).



this rigorous dealing of the Spaniards they know not, except it proceed by Tyrone's agents, who do pretend that the Queen's impost upon Spanish wines is a great means to enrich her to maintain her wars in Ireland."<sup>1</sup> The above is at least a suggestive interpretation of what the Spaniards may actually have thought of the impost by that date. At the same time it has to be remembered that while the impost gives some index to the state of the legitimate trade in wine, it does not include the whole foreign trade. Even in its amended form there were some kinds of wine (mainly French) to which it did not apply, and a tendency grew in favour of their import.

For the less official side of the traffic there is varied information which includes details of management showing that a large part of the Continental business was carried on by Irish traders going themselves to the vintage, especially in the capacity of agents. One man might act as factor, choosing and purchasing the wines for several merchants in the same town. So important was this system that according to a Galway Corporation statute of 1579, it was necessary to protect the home merchant's interests against fraudulent marking of the wines by the agent. "In a generall Court holdin . . . it was concludyd and agreyed . . . that whatsoever merchant or merchantes of eich degre of this Corporacion that shuld make any viadge to Spayne, Fraunche or other forayne countrie, having anye kynd of comissyone or auctoritie for bringinge or transporting any kynd of wyne whereby any person or persons so bringinge the same by such auctoritie or commission under pretence would saye that he would so bring the one halfe quarter or third parte in any such shipp or shippinges coming to Galwaye of ther owne goodes onelye to mark and signe of the said wyne, beinge the beste under their markes, for deceivinge and defraudinge of those their neighbours that shuld so send them . . .

<sup>1</sup> C. Car. MSS., Vol. IV, p. 62.

and for escheuinge and abolishinge of this above commonlye used amonge us . . . it is nowe . . . agreed that from henceforth no merchant nor marchantes shall not use or pratic to enseale or mark any signe or signes uppon anye pipe, bout or hogshead at the byinge thereof in no forren contrye until it be enletyd [unladen] and devydid at the key of Galwaye acustemyd, accordinge as it shall fall out by lottes, excepte Tente, Bastard, or other pryncipall and deare wyns."<sup>1</sup> The above is also instructive as an example of a form of the law of principal and agent adapted to mediaeval surroundings; and the apportioning of profits, or liabilities, seems to have been a frequent source of trouble in these early joint ventures. Thus in the Patent Rolls is the following award made between John Stacboll and James Creagh of Limerick "concerning a certain carvell laden with wines to the number of 6 score butts, for which Creagh disbursed £88 os. *od.* and Stacboll £40 5s. *od.* It is adjudged that the latter shall deliver to Creagh £24 os. *od.*, and the half of the profit, on their return to the city of Limerick and that the Lord Chancellor should choose two indifferent persons to hear the account of both parties concerning the costs and profits of the wines."<sup>2</sup> A few years later is the record of a similar order taken between J. Wingfield, D. White and N. White in relation to the freight of a French ship of wines,<sup>3</sup> and doubtless the Galway Corporation Statute was framed to avoid such wasteful suits there. Sometimes the disputes were more serious and involved the jealousies of whole townships, as when the Mayor and Corporation of Limerick complained to Lord Deputy Bellingham that a Limerick boat "laden with wines" had been wrecked on the coast of Wexford and the goods plundered by the inhabitants, who were very reluctant to make reparation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS., Comm. Rep. 10, App. IV, p. 428.

<sup>2</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 167 (2 Ed. VI.)

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 433 (1559).

<sup>4</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 100 (1549) cf. C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 35. "Decree in Chancery, whereby it is ordered that Thomas

Further evidence of the extent of the wine traffic is to be found in the Repertory of Decrees. This again is of a legal character, and as the Decrees are principally records of the judgments given in cases of debt, the impression gained is not perhaps the happiest. Nevertheless instances of defaulting payment are not without value; they infer the existence of properly fulfilled transactions. As regards the wine traffic the Decrees make one fact clear, and that is the participation of the Dutch, especially in the middle of the century and during the embargo against France. Spain and France are so often referred to that it is well to find reminders that shipments were also made from Flanders, as the following illustrations show. On 1st December, 1555, judgment was given that the defendant, Francis Tyrling, of Antwerp in Flanders, merchant, or in his default, John Anwarp, of Dublin, goldsmith, his surety, should pay to the plaintiff, Thomas Fitzsymons, of Dublin, merchant, "three butts of good Shereis wine" pursuant to agreement between plaintiff and the defendant Francis, or in lieu thereof £8 per butt according to the price of wines at that time and costs."<sup>1</sup> Fitzsymons must have been unfortunate in his debts as a few years later there again appears a similar order—that Francis Tyrling, of "Anwarpe in Flanders," should pay to Thomas Fitzsymons, merchant of Dublin, or his assigns, the sum of £28 18s. 8d. for "3 butts of sherry," and for his costs, etc., 20/-.<sup>2</sup> But the Irish traders were not always the injured parties and a decree of the 18th June, 3 Eliz, ordered that the plaintiff, "Martin Seelbye of Hambrough

Butler of Rosse, merchant, and the Sovereign, Council and Commons of Rosse, be chargeable to Robert Strong of Waterford, merchant, for damages sustained by said Strong in respect of a quantity of Spanish wine, taken by means of a false cocket, in Butler's name, out of the ship *Salamander of Brest*, consigned to Rosse; provided that the Sovereign of Rosse have lawful remedie against those of Waterford who entered the ship."

<sup>1</sup> Repertory to Decrees (Record Office, Dublin Castle) under date given, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* Under date 14 February, 1561, p. 85.

in Duch-land," should recover against Robert Leonard, Sovereign of the Town of New Ross, £9 10s. *od.* sterling, due to him for a certain parcell of Rochell wines, being in arrear the sum of £8 10s. *od.* sterling current money of Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

During the latter part of the sixteenth century, when Elizabeth's ministers were much concerned with the dangers (real and imaginary) of Spanish preparations, and of the co-operation of the native Irish, the Government eagerly sought after information about the latest developments abroad. The State Papers preserve many reports which incidentally contain numerous references to the liquor trade, because merchants returning from the vintage, and especially from the Andalusian coast, were frequently consulted and examined. Officials resident in Ireland were instructed to forward the rumours which they obtained from traders. Thus Geoffrey Fenton sent on to Burghley the following letter which he had received from William Lyon, Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. "Being mindful of the charge received from your worship, I rode within these few days to Kinsale, of purpose to hear news as I understood of the arrival of certain ships there. And coming thither, there was (and yet is) three tall ships which about the 18th of Nov. last left Spain, and meeting at St. Malo (whence they be) came in company upon this coast, two of them be freighted by three merchants of Galway, for Galway, with sack and aquavita; their names be James Black, Geoffrey French and Patrick Font. The other vessel is bound to Limerick freighted by one Philip Roche of that city."<sup>2</sup> Lord Deputy Perrot saw fit to forward to Walsingham a letter from Alexander Brywer, Mayor of Waterford, in which he mentions "Three ships of our town arrived here who departed Cadiz in Andalucia about the beginning of the last month. Their lading is sack and aqua vitae."<sup>3</sup> Simi-

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* Under date given, p. 82.    <sup>2</sup> *C. S. P. Ire.*, 1586-8, p. 454 (1587).

<sup>3</sup> *C. S. P. Ire.*, 1586-8, p. 489 (1588).



larly Patrick Foxe wrote to Walsingham of the intelligence he heard from Herbert, a Dublin merchant, who "came lately from Spain with a ship *laden with wines*."<sup>1</sup> Indeed instances of this kind are almost innumerable, and their frequency during a period of depression helps to show how very considerable the extent of the Hispano-Irish wine trade must have been in the unrestricted part of the first half of the century. It is true that the great dependence of the south-western Irish towns on this intercourse (and earlier on that with France as well), was recognised by the administration and partially admitted as a necessity, even in times of nominal blockade, while the acquisition of information about foreign affairs was regarded as an additional justification for the granting of licenses. Whenever individuals or towns had suffered severe commercial hardships, a patent for importing wines was considered to be an almost infallible economic cure. For example, in 1590, when the citizens of Limerick were much impoverished as a result of the Desmond "commotions," and the prevailing restrictions on international traffic, Richard White petitioned the Privy Council on their behalf for a licence "to trade with the leaguers for 200 tons of Spanish wines to be transported to Limerick to be paid for of such Ireland commodities as are now prohibited."<sup>2</sup> The same idea is implied in the patent to Nicholas Bourke of Limerick, merchant, "to import into Limerick from France, Spain, or Portugal 200 tuns of wine yearly, for 3 years, in any French or other foreign vessels. Also protection for foreign merchants and mariners who bring them, and license to take return cargoes of unprohibited goods, paying all customs. On account of his losses the Queen's victuallers are not to take up wines, salt, iron, or other merchandise from him, if sufficient can be had elsewhere in the city."<sup>3</sup> But these licenses

<sup>1</sup> Ib. 1588-92, p. 120.      <sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1588-92, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup> Dep. Keeper of Pub. Recs. in Ire., *Fiants. Eliz. Rep.* 13, App. 4, p. 143. cf. grant to Nicholas Skiddy of Cork, merchant, in consideration of the losses sustained by him to bring in "3 score tonnes of wyne

only enabled a minimum of the business to be carried on; even with their help the real Hiberno-Continental traffic in liquor was sadly crippled at the close of the century.<sup>1</sup>

Although stress has been laid on the importance of the direct transport of wines from the Continent, it must not be forgotten that supplies were also re-shipped from England. Curiously enough these were generally of the inferior kinds, the *vini corrupti* of the early Custom's Accounts, while the wines straight from Spain and France were usually of good quality. The West Country merchant's trading hand book expressly directs that in the north of Ireland, "yow shall sell all sortes of corrupt wines, but you must take hede of the people because they ar fals and full of treachery, therefore you must kepe good wache by night and be upon your owne kepinge," and in the west "your best comodyties is secks of Andolozia and Gaskone wines . . . but of wyne you shall dispathe greate store and they will complye their bargaines very well and ar men of more sivillitie than those of the northe parts."<sup>2</sup> And this advice is corroborated by the regularity, if not the size of the entries, which are found in the Custom's Accounts and Port Books.

Wine, however, was not the only liquor consumed, and so far as the import from England is concerned, that of beer—a real English product—is more important. Judging from the Accounts the consumption of beer in

. . . so that no portion of the wines should be given to any of the rebels, or other detected or disloyal person." (C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. 2, p. 38, 1583). Somewhat similar patents including permits for the import of salt and iron are found elsewhere in the Patent Rolls, especially during the French embargo c. 1556.

<sup>1</sup> The following instance is illustrative of the trouble which began even in 1559 and increased with the complications of political affairs. "Order of the Lord Deputy and Council directing the seizure of two French ships, which arrived at Limerick, laden with wines and military stores, in contravention of a license which they had obtained to trade, when peaceful relations were interrupted between England and France." C. P. and C. Rolls, Vol. I, p. 427, 1 Eliz.

<sup>2</sup> N. S. B. Gras, *Evolution of the English Corn Market*, pp. 430-6.

Ireland must have risen considerably during the Tudor period, because while in the early books it is a comparatively rare item, at the end of the century it becomes far more common. In addition larger quantities of the raw materials—hops and malt—were imported, but possibly this apparent increase in the popularity of beer was due rather to the higher prices, and the greater scarcity of wines during the Continental troubles, than to a genuine preference for it as a beverage.

Lastly mention must be made of Ireland's famous native drink, "usquebaugh." It was somewhat akin to the English aquavita, of which a little was imported in addition to the Continental variety. The unlicensed making of usquebaugh in Ireland caused administrators then, nearly as much anxiety as does that of "potheen" to-day. According to the Statute of 3 and 4 Philip and Mary, "aquavita, a drink nothing profitable to be daily drunken and used, is now universally throughout this realm of Ireland made, and especially in the borders of the Irishry, and for the furniture of Irishmen, and thereby much corn, grain, and other things are consumed, spent and wasted, to the great hinderance, losse and damage of the poor inhabitants of this realm . . ." <sup>1</sup> and consequently a system of licences <sup>2</sup> was introduced to keep a check on the evil. The charge that it used up valuable grain was true, and a serious one when there was a scarcity of provisions, but the chief interest in connection with importation is that it explains the necessity for the large quantities of malt and spices which were brought into the country. Fynes Moryson

<sup>1</sup> *Stat. in Irish Parls.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 251. The fine was £4. but peers, gentlemen, etc., of £10 per annum could make, if for their own uses only, without licence. cf. Kilkenny Corporation Statutes. Rothe's Register of Kilkenny, Hist. MSS., Comm. Rep. 2, App. p. 26, 1542, and proclamation of Sir J. Perrot, President of Munster, at Limerick, in 1571. C. Car. MSS., I, p. 411.

<sup>2</sup> eg. "Licence to The Oshileagher, of the abbey of Fetherd, David Hackett, William Younge, John Harte, Philip Wale and James Bolton, of Cashell, merchants, within the crosse of the Co. Tipperary, to make and sell aquavita for two years in the said abbey and town." Dep. Keeper Pub. Recs. Ire., Fiants. Eliz. Rep. 13, App. IV, p. 36, 1577.

says that "Irish usquebaugh is preferable to English aquavitaë, because by mengling raisins, fennel seeds, comenseed, and other things, they made it more pleasant, less inflaming and more refreshing to a weak stomach,"<sup>1</sup> and certainly, as will be seen later, there was a large import of such spices, which it would be hard otherwise to understand.

<sup>1</sup> F. Moryson's *Des. of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 425.



## CHAPTER X

### CLOTH, DRAPERY AND HABERDASHERY GOODS

"It is the nicitie of the English (that are every day innovating and devising of new fashions) that helpeth them (i.e. the Dublin merchants) away with their sattins, their silkes, their fine cloath, both woollen and linnen, their new striped stufes, their lace of gold, of silver, of silke, and a number of other gaudy devices, that the English do use to buy at unreasonable rates, that would never be vented amongst the Irish themselves."—Barnaby Rich, *A New Description of Ireland*, p. 69.

IRELAND'S other imports may at first sight be overshadowed by the rather overwhelming importance of wine, but in reality it is not so. There is more of real interest in connection with many of the humbler items, for they bring vividly before us the everyday life of the time. In dealing with this section, and especially with the small articles of drapery wares, no description can equal the naive statements of the fuller Custom's Accounts, and for that reason liberal extracts are given at the end of the chapter. It is through these bills of lading, so full of detail with their one or two yards of fustian, pieces of velvet, clowts of needles, packets of pins and groces of laces that we can picture the customers and shopkeepers who took part in this traffic of petty merchandise. It is also this portion of the trade which reflects decade by decade the growing civilisation of England, most of these goods being transported for the comfort of the towns folk and the Anglo-Irish residents. Thus, if the changes and developments in the items of export are few, it is far otherwise with the imported cloths and drapery wares. The difference between the bills of lading at the beginning and end of the century is immense, and illustrative of the growth in manufactures during the period, a growth with which

Ireland, alas, did not keep pace and hence the necessity for import. It should be observed, however, that most of these goods were Continental in origin, for it was not till early in the seventeenth century that the religious persecution abroad began to make its real effects felt. Then England began to benefit from the asylum she gave to Protestant refugees who enriched her with the jealously guarded trade secrets of their industries—the French skill in silk weaving, the fine cloth making of Flanders. Thus for most of the sixteenth century the Custom's Accounts really show a large proportion of re-exports, rather than exports, among the English goods sent to Ireland.

It has already been stated that the Irish friezes and checks were rough and coarse, and though, undoubtedly they formed, with linen, the main stuffs for all members of the community, both native and Anglo-Irish, the richer members also sought for finer materials. Of these the early accounts give a limited number when compared with the variety of later years. The most popular, however, for at least the first half of the century, seems to have been the *panni sine grano*, or cloth without grains, i.e. not dyed with the valuable red kermes dye. Doubtless it was more finely made and must have been a pleasant change from the loosely-woven Irish frieze. There was also the *panni streit sine grano*, the word "streit" signifying its narrowness. The term is used of many kinds of cloth, for broadcloth was a general designation defined by an act of 1482 as two yards within the lists, while streits were only one. The latter was, of course, cheaper as it needed less raw material and could be made by one person. Width was an important consideration in those machineless days when the shuttle was passed from hand to hand, and it took two weavers to pass the shuttle from one to another in order to make cloth wider than three-quarters of a yard. Probably because of its narrowness the *panni streit sine grano* was not so popular an

import, and the Bristol account for 1504 (which is fairly representative of the proportions for the three or four succeeding decades) only shows 6 dozens of the streit, as against 349 panni and 82 dozens of the ordinary broader *panni sine grano*.<sup>1</sup> This latter was double the price. the custom being 1/2 per roll.

*Panni Walliae* or Welsh cloth is also mentioned in these accounts, but as it was somewhat similar to the Irish friezes there was no particular demand for it, and about a dozen rolls appears to have covered the export to Ireland via Bristol each year.<sup>2</sup> Not so, however, with the *pilus tinctus* or dyed cloth, which, next to the *panni sine grano* occurs most frequently in the bills of lading. The position of the Irish dyeing industry will be considered in detail later, it is sufficient to point out here that as well as importing materials for dyes, it was also necessary to get in quantities of the coloured cloths for which the districts round Bristol were then famous. The Irish ray cloth was a native, but not so successful counterpart of the *pilus tinctus* which was rated at about four pence the pound, but this value is not always consistent and it sometimes occurs as high as sixpence or sevenpence the pound, varying, probably, with the expense of the colour. Like other popular articles of merchandise it is found in almost every trader's list of goods and in quantities from as little as six pounds at a time to over a hundred, while during the whole year 1504-05 the entire export from Bristol was over 6,100 pounds and worth about £112 os. od.—no mean total for those days and for one kind of cloth.<sup>3</sup> The same proportions of *panni sine grano* and of *pilus tinctus* were maintained for the early part of the century, judging by the similarity of the Bristol accounts for 1518-19<sup>4</sup> to that already quoted, but those of the middle of the century show a change. The former material still occurs,

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 122.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 29 and 122 etc.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 122.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 122.

but the number of rolls for each of the years 1554,<sup>1</sup> 1556,<sup>2</sup> and 1557<sup>3</sup> is under fifty, while the quantity of dyed cloth mentioned is almost negligible. Probably the middle of the century shows a falling off in these earlier materials, because the fashions in cloth passed through a transitional stage preparatory to the use of the very varied materials imported later in the Tudor period; but another reason for this change in the Accounts is suggested by an incidental reference to this trade in the same lawsuit which emphasised the value of Irish fish to the Bristol trades folk. The early Accounts prove that Bristol was then the centre for the purchase of cloth, for the boats returning to Ireland from the Cornish ports carried back very little, and consequently it is easy to believe in the partial truth, at least, of the following complaint made by the parishioners of Redcliffe in 1543 about the stoppage of their Fair. "Drapers of the said citie of Bristowe sworn and examyned, saye that before the said Faire was kept and used they might utter and sell yerely to men of Ireland and Wales and other parties of this Realme between Candlemas and Easter the nombre of towre hundred clothes or there abowytes every of them, and nowe sith the said Faire was kept they cannot sell yerely between Candlemas and Easter 20 clothes to their great hynderaunce and lossez as itt appereth more at large by their byll exhibited to the said Commissioners."<sup>4</sup> The "clothes" were probably mainly *panni sine grano* and *pilus tinctus* and it is only necessary to contrast the amounts sent to Ireland in 1504 with that in 1554 to sympathise with the drapers. If more of the material was sold it was not through their hands, and hence their grievance.

Monotonous as these early entries are with their constantly recurring consignments of *panni sine grano* and *pilus tinctus*, they are occasionally varied by refer-

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 122.<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 122.<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 122.<sup>4</sup> Selden Soc. *Select Cases in the Star Chamber*, Vol. II, p. 268.



ence to a few other kinds of material. Thus "olron" obtained from the Continent, is entered, a few lengths only at a time in the Bristol<sup>1</sup> and Poole books for 1504. It was rather valuable as only 10 lengths are estimated at £2 10s. 0d. in the Poole account.<sup>2</sup> Holland—the very name proclaiming whence it first came, and usually spelt "hollond"—occurs, like fustian,<sup>3</sup> in small quantities, while Brittany canvas went to Ireland via Bristol as much as to England via Ireland.<sup>4</sup> Then there are also a few consignments of kersies, and kersies *sine grano*, but the real heyday of the transport of these is later.<sup>5</sup>

For silk it can be said that the import both directly from abroad, and indirectly from England, remained steady, not only during the sixteenth century, but for centuries before and after. The beginnings of its use in Ireland possibly dates back to the time of the Phoenicians. According to the descriptions in Celtic literature it was not uncommon for men and women of high birth to possess whole garments of silk, and the following description of the hero in "The Story of the Copeared Dog" is illustrative of many other accounts. "A tunic of fine silk around his white skin; a wonderful gold-threaded mantle above his fair tunic; and a firm, close, well-woven breastplate about his slender, brightly, beautiful, well-curved body."<sup>6</sup> Although silk could never replace the coarse home-made stuffs for ordinary use in the Irish climate, it was obviously customary to wear it for the feasts and meetings such as those for which Tara was once famed, and even for such as were still held in the sixteenth century by Margaret O'Connor of Offaly and others among the Irish chiefs who could maintain a prosperous independence.<sup>7</sup> In Henry VIII's time the people in and near the Pale retained their love for garments lavishly embroidered

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 1<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 1<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 2<sup>0</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 1<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Ib.

<sup>6</sup> Ir. Texts. Soc. Vol. 10, p. 5, (ed. R. A. S. Macalister, London, 1908).

<sup>7</sup> C. Maxwell, *Irish History from Contemporary Sources*, p. 334.

with silk and their liking was shared by the Anglo-Irish women who were forbidden to "use or weare any kyrtell, or cote tucked up, or imbroydered or garnished with silke, or couched ne layd with usker, after the Irish fashiones" in the same statute which tried to prevent other Irish customs such as mantles, etc.<sup>1</sup> But attempts to stop the employment of silk were futile, whether they were prompted by motives of race distinction, or put forward for the benefit of the realm, i.e. in accordance with the mercantile policy of decreasing the goods got from abroad, and increasing the consumption of those made at home. Silk remained in demand, and the West Country Trader late in Elizabeth's reign still advised the taking of "some rawe silks of diver's collers" as the best material for sale in the west of Ireland.<sup>2</sup> Even as late in the next century as 1677, Richard Lawrence, manager of Ormonde's factory near Dublin complained that one of the causes of the country's impoverishment was "the universall liberty people of all ranks take to wearing silk and other forraighn manufactures."<sup>3</sup>

Silk was thus a regular item of import throughout the Tudor period, the only change being that from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards there was an ever increasing choice from among many of the closely related half-silk mixtures, etc., of the "New Drapery." This can be traced in the Accounts, for the early ones only show *cericum operatum* or worked silk (as opposed to the *cericum rawe* which was unworked and was also sent, especially about 1550). Like the *pilus tinctus*, *cericum operatum* comes in every trader's bill of lading and in the same varying quantities—from as little as half a pound at a time to over a hundred pounds for a prosperous merchant. It is regularly estimated at  $1\frac{3}{4}$  the pound, the total sent from Bristol to Ireland

<sup>1</sup> *Ir. Stat.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 121, 1537.

<sup>2</sup> N. S. B. Gras, *English Corn Market*, p. 435.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. MSS.*, Comm. Rep. VI, *MSS. of Marquis of Ormonde*, p. 742.

in 1504 amounting to 243 pounds, value £162 os. od. representing a fair quantity of the material.<sup>1</sup> The same high figure is maintained in the other early books, but by the middle of the sixteenth century, some of the kindred kinds of cloth appear, and consequently the pure *cericum operatum* is less important. Legal proceedings are always valuable for their incidental information, and among the Fiants of Henry VIII is an interesting one in this connection, for it shows the sale of satin, sarsenet, damask, etc., in Ireland in 1541. As it is not till the next decade that these are found in the Accounts it is probable that the import via England came slightly later than that from the Continent. This fiat shows an "order of the Lord Chancellor and Council (on reference from the Lord Deputy, upon a petition to Parliament by Powyll Fayoff of Little Egypt, his captain and Company, Egyptians sojourning in Dublin) discharging the said Powyll from an indictment in the King's Bench, alleging that he had stolen newe color sarsenet, blacksatten, and blacke damaske, at Swerdes, the goods of Richard Russell, of Drogheda, merchant."<sup>2</sup> It is a pity that more is not said about this company of gipsies and what they were doing in Ireland at the time, but at least it is pleasant to know that they were innocent of such a theft!

It is the late century Custom's Accounts and Port Books, however, which reveal the real choice of materials which were transported from England for the benefit of those who could afford them, and who were mainly connected with the government. The Chester and Bristol books from 1580 on contain entries for the following: Milan, Paris, Danish and Spanish silks; taffeta and French and Levant taffeta; Milan, Paris Jean and Holmes fustian; buskin; buffin; damask; buckram; grogram; velvet; Devonshire, Yorkshire, green, yellow, western and black western kersies;

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Dep. Keeper Pub. Recs. in Ireland, Rep. 7, App. 10, p. 58, no. 264.

Manchester, Rathdale and Welsh friezes and checks ; bays ; broadcloth ; shortcloth ; Dornix ; calico ; cambric ; cotton, and Manchester and Kendal cotton ; Northern dossens and streits ; quilts ; lace and felts—surely an array sufficient to satisfy the taste of the most fastidious Elizabethan.<sup>1</sup> Obviously the Paris silks, Levant taffeta, Milan fustian, etc., came from the Continent, mainly via Bristol, and the calico from the far East, but many of the other materials named are interesting evidences of the rising cloth trade of the North of England, and so came via Chester. Thus the making of kersies was earlier mainly confined to the south of England, the western and black western being later varieties, but in 1585 they are definitely mentioned as also coming from Yorkshire.<sup>2</sup> The Manchester and Kendal cottons and allied cloths, were not, of course, quite the same kind of material that the term "cotton" implies now, for it could not then be spun in England strong enough for use as warp, and so the "cottons" were really partly linen, the latter being used for the warp. Consequently, although there was not a true linen industry round Manchester, large quantities of the yarn were required for the kindred manufactures, and hence the petition to monopolise the raw material obtainable in Ireland, which has already been quoted in a former chapter. Further, there was a small import of lace.

Having seen the variety of goods mentioned in the Accounts it is easier to understand why the citizens of Waterford wanted to make a decree which should help the home sale of their own "rugs," etc., and among the Corporation archives is the following act for the year 1599. "Where it is considered by the Maior, Sheriffs and citizens of this citie how greatly the city is impoverished and dayly like to decay, that not onely the ablest and wealthiest persons do weare in their

<sup>1</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 24, 25, 26-27. K.R.P.B. 28 etc.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 28.



attyre no parte or parcell of any thinge wrought within this citie or realme, but also their men-servants, maid-servants and nurses in like manner do weare not othere than their maisters, being a chardge intolerable. For remedy whereof and to thend 'th' inhabitants of this citie may bee withdrawn from idleness and made to work and content themselves with the clothes wrought and made with in this realme, it is enacted . . . that from henceforth no nurse, man-servant or mayd-servant shall weare in their attyre or garment any fur, frendge, lace, silke or any wollen or lynnenn, save such as shal be wrought within this citie or realme, upon payne of forfeiture of all such garments,"<sup>1</sup> etc. A vast increase in luxury marked the end of the century in England and this was reflected in some of the Irish towns, but the above is really a mild edition of the numerous English proclamations against extravagance in dress. One of these latter also inveighs against "the present difficulties of this time, wherein the decay and lacke of hospitalitie appears in the better sorte in all Countreys, principally occasioned by the immeasurable charges and expences which they are put to in superfluous apparelling their wives, children and families, the confusion also of degrees in all places being greet, where the meanest are as richly apparelled as their betters, and the pride that such inferiour persons take in their garments, driving many for their maintenance to robbing and stealing by the hie waye."<sup>2</sup> The Waterford Corporation were by no means alone in their attempts to control the taste of the inhabitants by law, and their efforts were no more successful than the others of the same kind. Nor, indeed, did these foreign goods always come to Ireland in a creditable way. Quite apart from those brought in the normal course of the Anglo-Irish and Continental traffic many were off pirate cargoes. Both

<sup>1</sup> Hist. MSS., Comm. Rep X, App 5, p. 336.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, p. 104, note 2.

the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel were infested with pirates, many of them English, who were in the habit of disposing of their ill gotten merchandise in Ireland, where the traders, apparently asked fewer questions as to its origin. The Acts of the English Privy Council contain innumerable complaints from foreign merchants and orders for the restitution of their goods thus feloniously sold, but the following example is here quoted for the sake of its information about imported cloths. Also it refers to a certain Brown who was a notorious pirate of the period. Thus in 1546 a letter was sent to the Mayor, etc., of Cork signifying that "Browne capten of an English barke of 35 tonnes or thereabouts" had boarded a ship belonging to William van Tonge and Deryk vander Oven, Merchants of Antwerp, and laden with "brode wollen clothes, Sussex makeng kerseyes, calf skynnes, hollond cloth, fertherbed tykes, laton plates for candell styckes, snoffers, cowpers toolles and other warrees" to the value of five or six pounds. These were conveyed to Ireland and bought by John Copynger and John Browne, Cork merchants, who were alleged to have been secretly abetted by the Mayor. Search was ordered to be made for the goods which were to be given up to Hans Pele the rightful owner's deputy, and Browne and Copynger were to answer for any failure in the complete restitution.<sup>1</sup>

On examining the accessory trades of haberdashery, small mercery and drapery wares a similar growth in variety can be seen. The early Accounts contain comparatively little about these, although there are entries for the following articles: "thymbles" at 2*d.* a dozen; "nyldes" at 8*d.* a "clowt"; *fili* or thread at 5*d.* or 6*d.* the pound; *zona*, belts or girdles at about 10*d.* each and some pairs of "stockardes," stockings (to be distinguished from stockardes for wool cards) at the modest estimation of 1/- a pair. Laces of several

<sup>1</sup> Acts of the Privy Council, 1542-7, pp. 455-6.

kinds, *ligula*, *laquei*, "cuttis" are mentioned more frequently at about 1/- the gross, and also points, which were very necessary items of Elizabethan attire.<sup>1</sup> Presumably the above articles formed the main contents of the "habordashe and pitimèrchandis" referred to in the following Waterford statute of 1522-23 when it was considered how there had been "greate variants and debate amongst the inhabitants of this citie for the bying of mariner portages and other haberdashe and pitimerchandis broght by marchant estrangiers commyng to this citie." Consequently it was decreed that all merchandise that was "devyvable" should be brought by the Mayor and bailiffs who should then distribute them to the freemen of the city—the private goods of free citizens being excepted. The arrangement sounds excellent and was doubtless businesslike applied to many articles of trade, but it is amusing to picture the merchants quarrelling over their shares of the pairs of stockings and dozens of belts and thimbles, etc., which constituted the haberdashery and petty merchandise.<sup>2</sup>

These goods, again, were mainly foreign in origin and it is only necessary to glance at the accompanying cargoes in the Custom's Accounts of Flemish and French boats coming to Bristol or Southampton to be convinced that most of these luxury articles occurring among the English goods for export to Ireland, were re-exports. Many consignments must have come direct to Ireland, especially early in the century, and these are probably the ones referred to in the Waterford statute which has just been quoted, but as there is little evidence on this side attention is of necessity directed to the great growth in the variety of the items in this trade sent from England, and which is revealed in the Accounts. This is especially noticeable from 1550 on, while the late books contain specifications which would rival the

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS., Comm. Rep. X, App. 5, pp. 327-81.

detail of many a modern docket. So great did the development of these small goods for transport become by 1580, that they are not always then recorded in detail, the Custom's clerks, especially at Chester, being fonder of just entering so many packets and hampers, etc., as containing small wares to a certain value with the accompanying amount of custom. Where fairly full lists are given, as in some Bristol and Bridgwater books, the following goods are entered: Thread of many kinds, cotton, silk, "syters," packthread, and in all colours; tassells, "nobbes of silk" for embroidery; thimbles and needles in increasing quantities, as well as knitting needles; "pynnes and clasps" by the thousand; many dozens of leather and riband laces. Buttons of all kinds are enumerated by the "groce," silk, glass, thread and even hearse buttons; combs; brushes; looking glasses and mirrors; shoehorns; beads; belts; "hosen" both worsted and woollen and for children and women; boots and shoes; hats and children's and felt hats; woollen and velvet "nyght cappes"; gloves; and even cotton wool by the pound.<sup>1</sup> The individual values are rarely given after 1560, so that it is impossible to compare them with those in the early books, but as these luxury articles became more common they became proportionately cheaper, and probably did not really rise in price as much as many other goods. But the character of the trade is probably best illustrated by a few extracts. "The 19th daie of October 1585. In the Jonas of Chester burden 26 tonnes, the Master William Ratcliffe frayted for Dublin. George Sher of Dublin one fardell containing 120 yardes walshe frizes and one barrel nayles, valued at £6. whole custome 6/-. neate custom free by charter . . .<sup>2</sup> William Mellichapp of Dublin fyve trunkes containing 60 dossen feltes and other

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{31}{18}$ ;  $\frac{31}{32-35}$ ;  $\frac{24}{1}$ ;  $\frac{199}{5}$ . K.R.P.B.  $\frac{131}{254}$  etc.

<sup>2</sup> Dublin merchants were exempt by charter from much of the Chester Custom.



smale wares valued at £300, whole custume £15 os. od.,  
 neate custom nil . . . Patrick Browne of Dublin one  
 fardell containing one pece walshe frizes, 2 peces blacke  
 bayes valued at £4 (whole custom 3/-, net custom nil).  
 more fyve peces Kendall cottonis valued at 40/- (net  
 custom nil.) more one northern streite whole custome  
 1/1 (net custom 1/1). More one clothe of pewke coller  
 whole custome 6/8, neate custome 6/8. John Malone  
 of Dublin one hogeshead one fardell containing 8 dossen  
 horsecombes, 6 dossen wolle cardes, 3 paire botes, 2  
 paire showes, 77 yardes flanen, one grene cadowe, one  
 carpett, one firkin sope one grosse and half knyves  
 20,000 latt nayles valued at £10 (net custom nil) . . .  
 John Shaghane of Dublin 2 peces frizes, 3 peces quilte  
 and other smale wares valued at £8 (net custom nil.) ”<sup>1</sup>  
 “ In the Rose of Bristell, of the burthen of 18 tonnes  
 . . . master for Corcke, William Creagh of Cork, mer-  
 chant. A grose of trenchers, a grose of combes, 200  
 of hoppes, 3 nestes of painted boxes, 3 firkins of blacke  
 sope, half hundred of orchell, half pannis Spanish silke,  
 2 boltes of parris silke, 6 yardes levant taffeta, a  
 grose of statute lace, a grose of peny knyves, half  
 grose pocket knyves, a hears clothe; 2 dozen girthes,  
 2 dozen penny girdells, 20 pounds pewter, 6 pounds  
 bombasse, 2 dozen wastes, 6 feltes, (felt hats), 6 dozen  
 children hattes, half dozen mirors, 3 burthens stele,  
 2 dozen of lokes, a grose of painted paper, half pound  
 chaine lac, half pound syters thred, a stune of allom,  
 3 dozen hemp, half dozen yardes callico, a dozen fallinge  
 bandes. 2 grose of buttons ” and as the whole custom  
 amounted to 9/2 the value of the above list was about  
 £9 3s. 4d.<sup>2</sup> A detailed Port Book for Bristol 1591 has  
 very similar entries, e.g. : “ James Welshe of Water-  
 ford merchant for fower gross of trenchers, three dossen  
 of hattes, three ells of taffitis, two smale gross of penny  
 knives, one pece Jeane fustian, half a piece of Myllian

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{3}{18}$  Chester, 1585.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{2}{11}$  Bristol, 1590.

(Milan) fustian, twenty fower pounds of packe thred, three remnantes of broad clothe, containing forteene yeardes and a half, twenty yeardes bayes, one hundred of battry." Custom  $6/8^1$ . and so on for the full late records.

<sup>1</sup> K.R.P.B. 11<sup>3</sup>1.

## CHAPTER XI

### SALT, IRON, COAL, CORN

" The Territory of Dublin . . . having a fertile soil and rich pastures, but wanting wood, so as they burn turf, or sea-coal brought out of England." —F. Moryson, *Des. of Ire*, ed. H. Morley, p. 416.

ATTENTION must now be paid to some commodities partaking less of the nature of luxuries than those dealt with in the two preceding chapters. The vital importance of salt and iron is immediately obvious, that of coal and corn less so, considering the existence of local substitutes, but at least their importation, if avoidable, was far less luxurious in character than the wine and cloth, etc., already referred to.

The economic value of salt in the sixteenth century can scarcely be overrated, especially in a country like Ireland which depended so much for its wealth on the collection and transport of hides and fish, the preservation of which was mainly by various degrees of salting. Little, if any, was then procurable locally, for the existence of the mines at Carrickfergus was unknown, and there is no evidence of its manufacture from salt water or otherwise, in the country. One attempt, it is true, was made by Peter Back, of Brabant, for in 1567, he wrote to Cecil asking him to add salt to the patent he desired for the making of madder and morocco leather in Ireland; but either the patent was refused or else the enterprise was unsuccessful, as nothing further is heard of the salt.<sup>1</sup> All supplies, therefore, had to be imported either directly or indirectly from the Continent, for although the making of salt was naturalised in England about this time through the energy of Cecil,

<sup>1</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 338.

who encouraged Gaspar Seelar and others in their efforts, not enough was made to satisfy the home demand, and certainly there was none over for export.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, salt was a commodity which commanded a ready market in both England and Ireland and consequently it appears among the Irish re-exports, (as already pointed out) and with great frequency among the English shipments for Ireland of towns like Bristol and Bridgewater, which were in close touch with France and Spain, then the main salt-producing countries of Europe. With salt, as with wine and iron, it is certain that the major portion of Ireland's supplies came through direct trade with the Continent, and that the import via England, though important, formed a comparatively small proportion of the whole. Here again, our knowledge of the foreign traffic is limited by the scattered nature of the existing evidence, but assuredly it was very considerable in view of the large demand, and of the information which is extant. As has already been remarked in the chapter on wine, a common form of licence was for its import, but usually in conjunction with large stores of salt and iron. This is especially so during the middle of the century when Tudor trade regulations began so much to take the form of licenses—partly granted, one suspects, for the sake of the profit which might accrue to the crown. These licenses are either for a certain number of years, or for specific amounts of the goods, with exact limitations as to the ports of discharge and instructions that the imported goods should preferably be paid for by exchange with native commodities. For example, the permit to “ John Challoner, Thady Duffe, John Nagle and John Ussher, citizens and merchants of Dublin, to import by themselves, or their factors, in their ships or galleys, 1,000 hogsheads of wine, 400 weys (25 quarters) of salt, 400 tons of iron, before feast of the

<sup>1</sup> W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, pp. 77 and 310. It was not till the discovery of the rock salt at Droitwich in 1670 that England became independent of imported salt.



Purification of the B.V. 1559 into the ports of Wexford, Dublin, Dorodah (Drogheda) and Dundalk ; that the merchants, whether French or others, should remain in safe conduct and special protection with their wares in passing and re-passing, and might take and export out of Ireland wares and commodities to the value of the merchandise and victuals imported, provided they quietly and peaceably conducted themselves in coming and returning.”<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough, a few similar grants of the same date give permission for the wine, salt and iron to be brought from Scotland, although such commodities were not among her native products. Presumably Ireland was still in a comparatively favourable exporting position, and so it must have been possible to obtain these easily-marketable re-exports on favourable terms from Scotland, in exchange for Irish wares.<sup>2</sup> But it was directly from France and Spain that the whole boat-loads of salt came, and even during the intermittent state of war with those countries at the end of the century, the trade was maintained by means of licenses and failing these, through illegal traffic. As in the case of wine, some of the most valuable information comes from the incidental references to the contents of their boats made by mariners when examined on their return from the Continent as to the state of the Spanish preparations for war. For example, the papers for 1587 contain the examination of Miles Brewett, a mariner of Dublin, which was taken before Sir J. Perrott, then the Lord Deputy. This Brewett in declaring his calling, said that he was “ a pilot in a Scottish ship of Orkney, of the burden of

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 374, no. 81. cf. similar grant to Walter Pippard, of Dublin, and J. Doven, of Waterford, ib. no. 82. Also others to N. and S. White, of Limerick ; to T. Marten and D. Browne, of Galway ; to G. Galvan ; and to Thady Duff, R. Ryan, P. Sarsfield, C. Sedgrave, W. Handcock and P. Gough, of Dublin. Ib. nos. 83 and 85, p. 415, no. 197, and p. 414, no. 196, all during the years 1557-9.

<sup>2</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. I, p. 374, nos. 84, 86 and 87. No. 84 contains the license to Archbald Laughlen or Liell and J. Greime of Glasgow, apparently Scottish merchants.

120 tons, which was freighted by one, Mr. Lynche, of Galway, for Lisbon, who sold their wares in that city and loaded themselves back again with salt."<sup>1</sup> As 120 tons meant a large vessel in those days, the total lading of salt was a very considerable amount. Another instance from the State Papers of a few years later, 1592, tells the same tale. Richard Ailward, Mayor of Waterford, wrote to the Lord Deputy reporting the information he had gained from "one Edward Leonard, a merchant, of Waterford, who departed Lisbon . . . and came from thence in a Frenchman laden with salt to Cork."<sup>2</sup> And there are innumerable references of the same kind all showing that it was impossible to do without this Spanish trade, which the Government was practically forced to acquiesce in to some extent, whether it was for wine, salt, or iron.

As regards the salt which came to Ireland as an English export the Custom's Accounts are a guide, but the quantities fluctuate so much from year to year that it is hard to form any definite opinion of the normal figure. The real fact seems to be that salt was sent on to Ireland in the same haphazard way that it was re-exported to England—to fill up a cargo, etc., and so the quantities vary from under ten tons in one year, to over thirty or so in another, in the books of a port like Bristol;<sup>3</sup> but there is certainly less mentioned at the end of the century, probably because Irish merchants succeeded in maintaining more frequent intercourse with France and Spain than the more law-abiding English traders. But assuredly the total import from all sources was large enough to render the tax of 1*d.* on each bushel coming in to Ireland, which was granted to the Crown by the Irish Parliament in 1545, one of considerable value.<sup>4</sup> The measures of weight most recorded in the Custom's Accounts are the tun and half-tun or pipe, 16/8 for the former and 8/4 for the latter being an average estimation

<sup>1</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1586-8, p. 320.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1592-6, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 29 and 1312.

<sup>4</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 76.

for the first part of the century.<sup>1</sup> The Accounts also afford one interesting example of indirect Irish-French trading in this commodity. Thus at the small Cornish port of Helford the following information occurs among the notes of boats which had entered the harbour: "The firste of October. The Barcke Buggins of Hailford, borden 40 tonnes, whereof is master John Lawrie, from Rochell. Thomas Woodes Irishe merchantt for 10 tonne of baye salt for his store and provision, bound for Irelande."<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately the entry gives no further details, but it would be interesting to know how Thomas Woodes continued his journey. He must have picked up some Irish or English boat at Helford which was bound for Ireland, or did he go on in the said "Buggins"?

The other great import of vital necessity was iron, and as has already been pointed out, many of the licenses for its importation occur in conjunction with those for wine and salt. Ireland, both in the sixteenth century and before, sought large supplies from Spain, as well as some from England. As in the case of salt, it was partly a failure to utilise the possible home resources which allowed of such a large demand from abroad, and although Ireland is sparsely endowed with metals, more might have been made of the local iron stone and "bogg myne," even if the better qualities had still to be brought from Spain. The main feature about this curious "bogg myne" is that it was found near the top of the soil in bogs or other low places, and was therefore easily reached. When new, the ore was yellowish and like clay, and after exposure to the open air it became dust of a black or brownish colour, but was rich in metal.<sup>3</sup> Yet it was not till late in the sixteenth century that the native supplies began to be really exploited. According to Robert Payne's "Description" in 1589 they were quite worth while, for he declared: "There is verie riche and

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 1<sup>29</sup>/<sub>2</sub> and 2. etc.      <sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 1<sup>18</sup>/<sub>9</sub>.

<sup>3</sup> R. Payne, *Des. of Ire.*, in 1589. Ir. Arch. Soc. Tracts, Vol. I, p. 19.

greate plentie of iron store, and some sort more than we haue in England, which they call Bogg myne, of the which a Smith there will make at his forge Iron presently. Also there is great store of Lead ore, and Wood sufficiente to mayntayne divers Iron and Lead workes (with good husbandrie) for ever.”<sup>1</sup> The truth of Payne’s statement is borne out by the fact that some of the planters profited handsomely from his advice, notably the Earl of Cork, who is reported to have made £100,000 by his Munster works. Unfortunately these adventurers did not exercise “good husbandrie” at their forges, and the prodigal use of timber further depleted the remaining wooded areas of Co. Cork.<sup>2</sup> The effects of this local production, however, were not felt till early in the next century, and as late as 1585 it was still essential to get whole boat loads from abroad. This is illustrated by the following reference from one of the many letters containing political information gained from merchants. Lord Deputy Perrot wrote to Walsingham: “And even now Justice Walshe showed me a letter written to him, from the Mayor of Waterford, who willed him to impart it unto me. He saith that two merchants of that city, arriving there on Sunday . . . in a French bark of St. John de Luz, freighted by themselves with Spanish iron.”<sup>3</sup>

Judging from the Custom’s Accounts the quantities brought from England were comparatively small, some six or ten tons to the value of £26 to £36 being a fair average for many Bristol books per year, and as little as one hogshead being sent at a time.<sup>4</sup> One mid-century book does show iron to the value of as much as £108 5s. 0d.,<sup>5</sup> but this appears to be higher than most books of the same decade.<sup>6</sup> Generally speaking, late

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> C. S. P. Ire, 1586-8, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A., 20, 19, etc.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A., 11, Bristol, 1557.

<sup>6</sup> K.R.C.A., 18, Bristol, 1554-5 (£36 worth).



in the century less was sent,<sup>1</sup> and the reason for this is not far to seek, as England was not in a position to spare it for export. Under Cecil's care an attempt was made to make the ordnance independent of foreign supplies, and through the encouragement of the Company of Royal Mines and the granting of monopolies for the reviving and introducing of mining and metallurgical industries, the object was attained, especially so far as the production of iron and copper was concerned. But in addition to the need of iron in England for war purposes, another factor was at work to restrict the output, and that was the consumption of timber at the forges. This destruction was a real menace to shipbuilding, and consequently some of the works near the coast were suppressed by government.<sup>2</sup> Indeed this danger was felt about all the production of iron in England right up to the time that coal took the place of wood for smelting; incidentally in the eyes of the Government it added to the virtues of those, who, like the Earl of Cork, set up works in Ireland. Since the home demand in England therefore surpassed the output, it is not surprising that the later export to Ireland was comparatively insignificant, and that she continued to draw her main stores direct from abroad.

Coal has become such a necessity to life in this century that it is hard at first to realise that it was a luxury in the sixteenth, and was only beginning to come into use as an article of fuel, even in London and the other seaport towns, to which it could be easily shipped. But if it was a luxury in England with a larger population and fewer woodlands, it was even more so in Ireland, where there was more wood available, as well as ample supplies of turf for a substitute. Moreover, large as is the area

<sup>1</sup> e.g. None in two months at Bristol, 1590 (K.R.C.A.  $\frac{2}{4}$ ), and during part of 1591 at Bristol only "fower tonnes of iron" and 700 (K.R.P.B.  $\frac{11}{2} \frac{3}{4}$ ). Also Bridgewater, 1591, only "650 ferri," valued at £1 12s. 6d. (K.R.P.B.  $\frac{10}{10}$ ).

<sup>2</sup> See W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, pp. 57-60.

covered by bogland now, it was greater in those days when no attempts at drainage had been made. The advantage of this wealth of peat was quite well recognised by English travellers, and Derrick in his "Image of Ireland" describes :

"The woodes above and neath those hills some twentie miles in length;  
Round compaste with a shakyng bogge, a forte of passyng strength,  
From whence a certaine fire is drawne to sheeld from winter's colde."<sup>1</sup>

All the native Irish and most members of the Anglo-Irish community used turf or wood for fuelling, as do many cottagers to-day, but in Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, etc., the richer burgesses and residents must have demanded the coal which the Custom's Accounts show to have been shipped there. According to George O'Connor, coal was considered a convenient return cargo and was brought for this reason, while the balance of trade was in Ireland's favour;<sup>2</sup> if so, once the habit of using coal was acquired, it persisted, for the import increased, even in the lean years at the end of the century, while it is first mentioned among the outgoing Bristol shipments as early as 1504.<sup>3</sup> So small are the quantities brought at a time that they scarcely seem worth while, but presumably coal was such a rarity in 1504 that the consignment of as little as "4 waies carbone" value 13/4 was quite justified.<sup>4</sup> There are three qualities named, carbon being the best, or real coal and corresponding to the "coles" of late century records, next came "coom," the small coal or slack, while "scrofe," or "scruff," was still more inferior. The values of these grades doubled during the century. Thus four weys at 3/4 per wey are equivalent to the later measures of "40 coles" estimated at £1 6s. 8d. in the Milford and

<sup>1</sup> J. Derrick, "Image of Ireland," 1581, Somer's Tracts, Vol. I, p. 572.

<sup>2</sup> G. B. O'Connor, *Elizabethan Ireland*, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 199.      <sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 199.

Cardiff accounts of 1586, etc.<sup>1</sup> Coom similarly rose in value, but was generally half the price of the best coal, scrofe being about half that again.

The Bristol export of coal, however, was practically limited to the beginning of the century, and from about 1550 on it came more from the ports near the Welsh mining centres—Milford, Cardiff, Carmarthen, and, in a lesser degree, from Swansea. Indeed, it generally formed the entire return cargo for boats from those ports which were bound for Ireland, and the value of the coal taken away often exceeded that of the Irish goods brought.<sup>2</sup> As was pointed out in the chapter on timber, the Wexford boats, though small, took the largest part in this trade, bringing wood or fish and returning with coal and coom, but it was shared with vessels from Carlingford, Drogheda, Malahide, Dublin, Ross and Waterford. In fact, the traffic at places like Milford (other than coasting) was mainly in fuel for Ireland, the other entries in their accounts being very few and often in connection with Portugal.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, the few remaining Custom's Accounts for these ports are very fragmentary, and it is impossible to get any for more than a few months or a few weeks at a time; yet even these fragments show a general uniformity in the trade. There are two comparatively undamaged books for Milford which contain entries for the seven months, February—September of the year 1587, and in that time 740 of "coles," value £24 13s. 4d., and 1,790 of coom, value £29 13s. 0d., in all £54 6s. 4d. worth, was sent to Ireland. Twenty-four ships were engaged in the business of transport, three of which were English and were bound for Dublin, but of the rest fifteen small boats belonged to, and were freighted for Wexford with 300 of coal (value

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 104<sub>5-6</sub>

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Milford seven months of 1586. Irish exports £48 6s. 10d., and imports all coal £54 6s. 4d. (K.R.C.A. 104<sub>5-6</sub>). Also Cardiff three months of 1587, Irish exports £26 13s. 4d. and imports (all coal) £50 6s. 8d. (K.R.C.A. 38<sub>8</sub>).

<sup>3</sup> e.g. K.R.P.B. 122<sub>23</sub>, Milford, etc. 1596.

£10 os. 0d.), and 1,275 of coom, (value £21 5s. 0d.), i.e. the major portion of the fuel exported. The other Irish boats were returning to Carlingford, Drogheda, Malahide and Dublin.<sup>1</sup> The export from Cardiff was greater, thus a three months ledger of the next year (1587) shows a proportionately higher figure, £50 worth of coal and coom being transported, (mainly in English vessels), during that short period.<sup>2</sup> The only obtainable evidence from Carmarthen is still more fragmentary, but very similar. It only registers the outgoing entries, but shows that during three weeks, June 25th—July 15th of the year 1588, fuel to the value of £26 6s. 8d. was shipped in thirteen boats to Ireland, and like the transport from Milford, was mainly in Irish-owned craft. This is probably due to the fact that the harbour at Carmarthen was bad, but was more convenient for the small Wexford boats than for the larger English. Thus none of the ten Wexford vessels referred to exceeded a tonnage of seven tons (the majority being only five), and altogether accounted for the transport of coal to the value of £17 10s. 0d.<sup>3</sup> The other vessels consisted of one for Carlingford and one for Dublin, while the only English boat with a bigger cargo (i.e. 200 of coal) was probably bound for the latter place as well, since Dublin merchants had fewer ships of their own than those of the other Irish ports.<sup>4</sup> As regards "the creek of Swansea" the only separate information occurs in a damaged Milford ledger for most of the year 1587-88, during which time coal and coom to the value of £37 10s. 4d. was sent to Ireland.<sup>5</sup> These figures explain the Wexford import of fuel, but not all of that which is known to have gone to Ireland. This is because the Dublin supplies were mainly transported via Chester, as is made clear in the ledgers of 1588 for that town, which show that 373 tons value, £62 3s. 4d. (3/4 a ton) were

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{104}{8}$ .<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{30}{8}$ .<sup>3</sup> Only 50 of coom (16/8) sent, the rest being good coal.<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{30}{8}$ .<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{447}{4}$ .



shipped to Dublin, but comparatively little to the other Irish towns which drew their stocks from the small Welsh ports.<sup>1</sup>

For the last decade of the century the place of the Accounts is taken by the Port Books, and these are, if anything, not only in a worse state, but compiled in a less satisfactory manner. They give, however, the general impression of a steadily increasing volume of traffic from those ports, especially Milford and Cardiff. Nor was this so limited to coal. Thus the Cardiff book for 1596 includes entries for some boatloads of small wares (similar to those of Chester and Bristol) as well as the not inconsiderable year's total of 153½ tons of coom, and 63 tons odd of coal despatched to Ireland.<sup>2</sup> Indeed there is no doubt that the consumption developed during the last years of the century. This may be attributed to two causes, partly to the destruction of timber which took place during the wars, but principally to the fact that the substitution of coal for wood (or turf) was becoming the fashion in England, and so was bound to be emulated by the Anglo-Irish residents. Judging by the accounts there is every reason to believe that the following order of 1601 was a real benefit to many inhabitants. The Queen wrote to the Deputy and Council that "for the ease of our subjects serving us there" she had released the late imposition on sea coals "passing out of our realm, for so much as shall be transported into Ireland, to the end that the same kind of fuel may be the better cheap had by them."<sup>3</sup>

Corn may be considered next as forming the last of the great bulk commodities, but taking the term in its broad sense to include the pulses—peas and beans, which played such a large part in mediæval economy. The place of corn among Ireland's sixteenth century exports has already been touched upon, and the tendency to send it abroad, explained. It has also been remarked that

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{3}{2} \frac{1}{2}$ .

<sup>2</sup> K.R.P.B.  $\frac{1}{2} \frac{2}{2} \frac{2}{2}$ .

<sup>3</sup> C. Car MSS., IV, p. 43.

the trade between England and Ireland was largely reciprocal, depending often on temporary and local conditions, and it is now necessary to show some of the main characteristics of the importation, and their particular effects on the nature of the exportation. Generally speaking, the corn that was sent out of Ireland, whether abroad, or to England, was the pure wheat corn, or else barley or oats, whereas much of that imported for ordinary use was inferior, i.e. rye, but especially malt, peas and beans. This statement applies to the normal trade, and does not include the frequent shipments of wheat, etc., for the army in Ireland, which are to be found separately in the Accounts (when entered at all).<sup>1</sup> The interesting feature of this very considerable import of peas and beans, (which is greatest in the early half of the century), is that it indicates a certain similarity between the Irish national economy and the individual manorial policy pursued in mediæval times, i.e. to sell the superior foodstuffs, and, if necessary, to buy the inferior instead, for domestic consumption.<sup>2</sup> Thus it seems that, even in times of prosperity, there was an inclination in Ireland to dispose of the better kinds of grain and to use at home an admixture containing some proportion of the cheaper imported *pisa et faba*. This policy may also have been due to a liking for peas and beans, and to the fact that owing to the dampness of the climate they did not ripen so well in Ireland; but cheapness was probably the main consideration. At all events, whether due to one or all of the above reasons, the frequency with which the entries for so many weys *pisarum et fabarum* occur in the early Bristol Accounts for 1492,<sup>3</sup> 1504<sup>4</sup>, and 1518,<sup>5</sup> is rather remarkable. Thus in 1504, out of a total import of 228 weys of corn, value £157 os. od., over half, i.e. about 132 weys (value

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 44, Bristol, 1571-2. "List of licenses in force for transmission of corn to Ireland," the corn being mainly assigned to members of the government for household and army supplies, etc.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. as shown in the rolls of the Bishopric of Winchester.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 29. <sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 112. <sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A. 112.

£88 os. *od.*) consisted of the pulses, while the remainder was almost entirely composed of malt (*bracy*), or of malt mixed with barley and beans. The peas and beans averaged 12/6 to 13/4 a wey, while the malt maintained the latter price.<sup>1</sup> These figures are significant because they are borne out by the similarity of the 1492 and 1518 Accounts and of the contents of the Irish boats returning from the Cornish Ports in 1498.<sup>2</sup> They all indicate that during the comparatively prosperous years of the Tudor period the Irish corn import was of a special nature—practically luxurious in character, for the pulses came in place of a better grain export abroad, and the malt was for the manufacture of liquor. The same may indeed be said of the import of hops, which increased during the century, and with malt went to the making of “*uisque-bagh*,” so that it can scarcely be wondered at that the authorities looked on its brewing with no favourable eye, for it not only depleted local stores of grain, but led to import of a valuable English product as well.<sup>3</sup>

The later Custom's Accounts show fewer consignments of peas and beans, or indeed of corn at all (except malt and hops), and these entries occur at Bridgewater<sup>4</sup>—seldom at Bristol. Nevertheless, from other evidence it is certain that the import increased, for in some years the devastation of war practically resulted in local famines, and some of the better grains were needed by the loyal populace whose intercourse with the “*mere*” Irish was rather restricted, although these might in other districts be sending it to the Continent. This change may be explained by the increasing regulations of the Mercantile System, so that many shipments of corn, even in the ordinary course of trade, do not appear in the Accounts, as they were conveyed under special bonds, and because of the troublesome restrictions it became less and less worth while to take away small consign-

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 1492.      <sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 1498.

<sup>3</sup> *Irish Stats.*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 251, 1556.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 2<sup>d</sup>, 1560; K.R.P.B. 1498<sup>a</sup>, 1591.

ments (e.g. a wey at a time) as was customary earlier. As Cunningham has remarked, many of these regulations look as if they were made for the profit which the Tudors might gain from granting licenses of exemption, and so the later Irish corn import must more often have formed a bulk cargo than before.<sup>1</sup> The great misfortune is that there are no records on the Irish side which might contain registers of such shipments, yet from the Patent Rolls and State Papers it is obvious that there was an importation of this kind. Thus from 1543 on there are grants for the transportation of corn from England, such as that to Philip Roche of Kinsale, who was certified by the Deputy and Council to be building a fortress in McCarthy Reaghe's country, in reward for which he was to have his license continued. The following year it was renewed, and was then stated to be for 1,000 quarters of grain, consisting of wheat, beans and malt, out of England, and to sell the same in Ireland.<sup>2</sup> The same year Walter Pepparde of Dublin was allowed to bring over corn and leather from England, in consideration of his losses sustained from pirates of Brittany in time of peace.<sup>3</sup> while a grant of 1559 shows a similar favour to the loyal townsfolk, who were then short of supplies. In "A memorial of such answers as the Queen hath given to sundry private suits, delivered to the Lord Deputy to proceed therein," it is stated: "Item, where the citizens of Waterford have made humble petition to have license for transportation of 800 quarters of grayn out of this realm of England, to the sayd Citie, Her Majesty, meaning to gratifie them, as it may be conveniently borne, is pleased that they shall have license for 400 quarters of grayne, those whereof, 100 of whete, 200 of maulte, and 100 of rye, and the like quantities the next year, so as the Irish shall repayre into this realm for the said grayne." Similarly Dungarvan was permitted 200 quarters of "grayne" consisting of

<sup>1</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 68.      <sup>2</sup> Ib. p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. p. 68. cf. also pp. 230, 326, etc.



wheat and malt "by due portions," while Youghal was also given a license "for its needs."<sup>1</sup> Six years later Kinsale pleaded that it was necessary to have a permit for 100 weys of wheat, etc.,<sup>2</sup> and in 1571 even Galway was very short of supplies, for the Bristol document registering the licenses (mainly governmental) for the transmission of corn also contains the following: "A license to Walter Blake of Galwaie in Ireland to transport so muche corne as might be laden in a barke of 50 tonnes for releuinge of the Necessitie of the towne of Gallwaie. Whereof is laden 96 quarters wheete and 24 quarters benes."<sup>3</sup> Did more of the special Corn ledgers, such as the above, exist, even on the English side, much further information might be gleaned, for just as many of the boat loads of grain from Ireland coming under separate grants of export to England, do not appear in the later ordinary Accounts, so it happened with those coming in. Still, it is interesting to note that even these licenses are usually for greater quantities of malt, rye, and inferior grains than of wheat.

<sup>1</sup> S. P. Ire, 1509-73, Vol. I, Eliz. no. 63 (p. 56 in Cal.).

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire, 1509-73, p. 259.      <sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A., 244.

## CHAPTER XII

### DYES, DRUGS, SPICES, MISCELLANEA, ETC.

IN this chapter it is proposed to deal with the remainder of the imports. Many of these can only be classed as miscellanea, although others belong to some group serving a distinctive purpose, and if it is thought that occasionally an unnecessary separation has been made, one reason at least may be assigned, that of convenience for purposes of representation. Thus the import of lead, tin, etc., has been separated from that of iron, because, although closely connected in use, the importation of the former was comparatively insignificant and would have unnecessarily confused the attempted outline of the traffic in iron. Here again the goods become so varied by the end of the century that extracts from the Accounts are the best means of illustrating the character of the trade.

First in importance among the small goods may be placed the allied commodities of dyes, drugs and spices which made up in rarity and value for their inferior bulk. Then, as now, some of these were employed both medicinally and commercially, especially verdegreafe, "greynes" and alum. The first is mentioned in the Bristol Accounts throughout the century, although not very frequently, nor in great quantities. The average consignment was some few pounds at a time, estimated at  $3\frac{1}{2}d$  to  $6d$ . the pound,<sup>1</sup> and judging from the Continental cargoes entering Bristol was, like many similar commodities, first purchased abroad. Indeed, in those less scientific days it must have been harder to obtain than now and was probably more used to

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 142, 1504.

produce the beautiful greeny blue dye than as a drug. "Greynes" occur in the same way in the Bristol Accounts, but more rarely and then at the higher value of 10*d.* a pound.<sup>1</sup> Apparently North African in origin, "greynes" were employed both as a spice and a drug, moreover it gave its name to the rich red dye from the kermes insect (cochineal). Alum, estimated in 1504 at the low value of  $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* the pound<sup>2</sup> and at 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* by 1518,<sup>3</sup> was the most important of these three, for it came in greater quantities, and was much used in the sixteenth century for certain of the finishing and dyeing processes of cloth making. Its second use was medicinal, but the first was the chief. Like other commodities, alum did not always reach Ireland by means of legitimate trade, and the following extract shows that with some "galles"<sup>4</sup> it at least once formed part of a pirate cargo. Among the Acts of the English Privy Council in 1546 is a letter addressed to the Deputy, etc., of Ireland "Signifyeing to them that where of late oone Rycharde Vaughan of Calays and other adventurers did spoile a shippe named Sancta Maria de Leuse, the master Alexio Gonzales, her lading being of alam and galles for the accompte of Fernando de Aza and Martin Lopez, the Emperour's subjectes, the same being consigned hither to the Kinges Majestes use, a parte of which alame as the Counseille understode was conveyed by them into Yrelande, where they have made or do entende to make sale of the same . . ." and provision was made that either restitution in kind or in money was to be made to the merchant's agent and bearer of the letter, Anthony de Marchina, "Jenevoise."<sup>5</sup> Some of the alum needed could have been supplied locally, for in the same year the experts who had been sent over to Ireland "to serche the mynes there," gave their report to the English

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.*    <sup>2</sup> *Ib.*    <sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 1392.

<sup>4</sup> A kind of dye found very rarely among the Irish imports, but once in a Bristol book, 1590. K.R.C.A. 241.

<sup>5</sup> Acts of the Privy Council (England), 1542-7, p. 422.

Privy Council. Their primary concern had been for the precious metals in connection with the attempts made to mine and coin bullion there, but they also expressly state the existence of "allome."<sup>1</sup> Nothing was done to develop the latter then, but under Elizabeth, among the other efforts to make England independent of various foreign commodities, were ones for the production of alum at home,<sup>2</sup> and it is interesting to find that there is at least one definite instance of a similar project in Ireland. Thus the Irish Privy Council Acts of 1569 contain a notice referring to the grant given to Lord Mountjoy and confirmed by the Irish Parliament "for the serching, digging, and findinge and makinge of allam and coppas a matter never attempted here in this realm."<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately no more is heard of the venture.

There were, of course, several other commodities imported which were purely in the nature of dyes. Ireland was badly stocked with such commodities, and from very early times largely relied on importation, for although some madder and woad were grown locally, most of the raw and worked materials for dyes had to be brought from abroad. The favourite colour of the native Irish was the bright yellow of saffron, and it would seem to have been popular among the Anglo-Irish as well, since Henry VIII both in a letter to the citizens of Galway and by statute, forbade his loyal subjects, men, women, and children, from wearing saffron in their "shirts, smocks, or any other garments."<sup>4</sup> According to the Custom's Accounts the import was far greater early in the period, and this is very probable because there was more intercourse with the native Irish during the first half of the century than the second. While consignments for pounds of *croci* estimated at 6/8 to 10/-

<sup>1</sup> Acts of the Privy Council (England), 1542-7, p. 501.

<sup>2</sup> W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. MSS., Comm. Rep. 15, App. Pt. III, p. 230.

<sup>4</sup> C. Car. MSS. I, p. 91, 1536, and *Ir. Statutes*, F. Vesey, Vol. I, p. 121. (28 Hen. VIII, cap. 15, 1537).



the pound occur frequently in the bills of lading of the Bristol books for 1504 and 1518,<sup>1</sup> the entries are much fewer in those for 1586, 1591, etc. The tendency to employ so much saffron doubtless also decreased with the general decline of Irish cloth making, and because of the greater attractiveness in the variety of new goods which came in. The same may be said of orchell, the purple dye obtained from the moss *orchellus linnatus*, which next to *croci*, is most often entered in the early books. It was not imported in the raw state, but ready for use, and is expressly designated as *operatus*, and usually valued by the stone at 1/8—approximately 1½*d.* the pound.<sup>2</sup> As yellow and purple are well known to have been the favourite colours of the native Irish in early days, it is quite interesting to see the persistency in the import of these dyes in the sixteenth century.

If the import of saffron and orchell declined, the opposite may be said of madder<sup>3</sup> and woad, for these two dyes are seldom found in the early books, though fairly often in the later. It may, indeed, even be questioned whether the use of madder did not supersede that of saffron, and it seems highly probable that the mixture of madder and woad replaced that of orchell. However, the main interest in these lies in the definite attempts which were made to produce them in Ireland during Elizabeth's reign. Certainly madder was growing there in 1567, although to what extent is unknown, but when Peter Back, of Brabant, desired a patent from the Queen for the converting of stag's skins, etc., into morocco leather in Ireland, he states that he observed much madder in the Earl of Ormond's dominions, and therefore he also asked to be allowed to carry on its manufacture.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately there is no further in-

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 190 and 190.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>3</sup> Mainly obtained through Flanders and estimated at about 5/- per 100. e.g. Bristol, 1518, K.R.C.A. 190.

<sup>4</sup> C. S. P. Ire, 1509-73, p. 338. cf. *Ib.* p. 340, when Peter Back writes to Cecil urging that the patent be granted for twenty-eight years.

formation about this patent, and so it is impossible to find out whether the enterprise was even started. If it was likely to interfere with the profits of so powerful a lord as the Earl of Ormond, it probably was not given. From the evidence furnished by another grant it seems that the madder grown locally was not properly prepared, although such a statement occurring in a document like the following has to be taken with reservations, since it was obviously in the patentee's interest to make out the best plea he could for a grant. Thus in 1584 the Queen wrote to Sir John Perrott, Lord Deputy, advising that a license should be granted to Peter de Maistres, of Turneyborn, and John Williams, of London, for the planting and dressing of woad, madder and rape for the making of oil. In the letter she states that these men, who were skilled in the above trades "upon conference had with some of our good subjects of that our realm, understood that some parts of the soile of that realm is very apt for the planting of woad, madder and rape, and that some portion of madder doth already grow there, little beneficial to the country for want of skill, both in the due planting and also in the dressing, whereby it is unsaleable; and as they have entered into some charge, and have offered to enter into far greater and to fetch some skilful workers with their families out of Flanders, to reduce the trade of the commodities to the manner of Flanders, whereby not only our customs and revenues are to be advanced, but also this our realm of England greatly benefited, and our realm of Ireland, both by setting numbers at work and by converting the soil . . . ." If Perrott found that their representations were true, and that the project promised to be beneficial, he was to make the grant, giving them the privilege "to dress woad, madder and rape after the manner of Flanders; and the same so dressed to transport and carry out of that our realm into this our realm or any other foreign ports, for and during the term of 21 years to come." The grant concludes with an inhibition

against others doing the same during the stated period, "always provided that none of our subjects there be restrained to plant and dress woad, madder or rape as heretofore, or as at this present time they are accustomed to plant and dress the same."<sup>1</sup>

The above is especially valuable because it applies to the projects for woad and rape as well as madder; moreover it is possible to trace the grant further from later references in the State Papers, although these only allude to the first named. During the years 1585 and 1586 various letters passed between Lord Deputy Perrott, Walsingham and Pieire de Maistres on the subject. In the first Perrott notified Walsingham that the two patentees were "much grieved at having to resign the woad matters,"<sup>2</sup> and it is possible that Walsingham then lent a sympathetic ear to their difficulties, for a little later de Maistres wrote to him about the money issued in connection with the scheme and about the success of the undertaking.<sup>3</sup> That Walsingham took a personal interest in the grant is clear, for in answer to de Maistres he wrote to Perrott informing him that he had already disbursed £100 for the sowing of woad, and would deliver another £100 after Christmas.<sup>4</sup> But the enterprise was not successful and the reasons for its failure are explained in a letter sent by G. Beverley to Walsingham during the course of the next year. According to Beverley, the gentlemen and landlords "seem to be incensed that their cattle will all die, if they should come to feed on ground where woad hath grown." He also declares that "It is better to grant license to sundry men of ability to travail in the making of woad at a yearly rent, than to compass the whole by a few hands." Finally he states that people are reluctant to join the venture because "the moisture of the realm is most doubted."<sup>5</sup> Evidently an expert was immediately sent

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Vol. II, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1586-8, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. p. 32.    <sup>4</sup> Ib. p. 35.    <sup>5</sup> Ib. p. 60.

over to examine the truth of the last statement, for shortly after there occurs the Certificate of "William Andrewe and others for the excellence of Ireland for the growing of woad."<sup>1</sup> Despite this assurance as to the suitability of the climate, the undertaking was still unsuccessful and probably ignorant obstruction by the landed interest and jealousy of the holders of the license, were, as Beverley suggested, among the causes of the failure. The original patentees soon lost heart, and in 1587 Perrott was informed that if the yield did not exceed thirteen tons, there would be a loss, and that he, (presumably de Maistre) "has passed his interest to some others, and entertained Richard Yck to deal with a parcel of ground at Inchiquin and to be furnished with money by G. Beverley, Andrewes to employ his stock near Dublin."<sup>2</sup> No more is heard of the woad growing, the brilliant prospects set forth in the Queen's letter never being realised, and although Beverley may have been more successful than de Maistres, he did not supply the whole home demand, for small quantities of woad still occur among the imports of contemporary and later dates. However, if the prosperity of the woad project was dubious, the madder appears to have turned out better. Curiously enough nothing is said about Beverley's right to grow madder in the transferred woad grant, but he evidently acquired a license about that time, and cultivated enough to export some. Thus the Chester Accounts record the fact that in 1588 he shipped several consignments of "grene madder," amounting to thirteen tons and one hogshead. As it was for Sir Francis Walsingham it landed free of custom.<sup>3</sup>

Last of the dyeing substances must be enumerated small quantities of "copperas" which, properly speaking, are the proto-sulphates of copper, iron and zinc, but as their scientific composition was little understood then, copperas was regarded as the blue, green

<sup>1</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1586-8, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 33-34.



and white salts found with those metals respectively. The tentative alum patent to Lord Mountjoy included the right to dig for copperas, but most of the material employed came both to England and Ireland from Germany via the Antwerp trade.<sup>1</sup> The green copperas was used for tanning as well and is the most frequently entered in the Accounts, although not before about 1550.

Drugs and spices were mainly eastern in origin and were commodities of import for all European countries alike. Doubtless supplies came to Ireland direct from Spain, Portugal and Flanders, the international retailers of these goods, as well as from England, but it is the Custom's Accounts which show some of the actual Irish consignments. Thus in 1504 it was common for many trader's bills of lading to contain small amounts of "sinamone" (cinnamon) and of "annes" (aniseed) at 2/6 the quarter, of mace and of pepper at 1/- the pound.<sup>2</sup> Later books also contain *zinziber* (ginger), nutmegs and cloves at 1/8 the pound, and fenell seed and comenseed (2*d.* a pound) which were used to enrich the Irish aqua vite.<sup>3</sup> The drugs most usually mentioned in addition to the alum, etc., already referred to, are, "boras" (borax) at 5/4, licorice at about 2½*d.*<sup>4</sup> and senna at 1½*d.* the pound,<sup>5</sup> while later in the century there are also brimstone and quicksilver.<sup>6</sup> Naturally enough these goods are to be found most in the Bristol, Chester or Bridgewater Accounts and not in those of the minor ports, since it was to Bristol, etc., that the Continental argosies came, and thence the spices and drugs were easily re-shipped to Ireland.

Besides flavourings such as spices, some other luxury foodstuffs were imported. Even the early Accounts mention quarters of "fructes" (fruits) and "resons" (raisins), while in the later there are also entries for

<sup>1</sup> See W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A. 1499, Bristol.    <sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 1499, Bristol, 1556.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 1499.    <sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A. 1499, Bristol, 1518.

<sup>6</sup> K.R.C.A. 241, Bristol, 1590, etc.

pears and apples, currants, prunes, almonds, sugar candy, comfits, vinegar and sometimes honey,<sup>1</sup> as well as for pounds of onionseed (1½*d.* a lb.) and leekseed (4*d.* a lb.). Judging from the number of times pounds of onion and leek seed are recorded, they were the favourite vegetables of the period. All these groceries were undoubtedly transported for the pleasure of the wealthier townsfolk who could afford to keep apace with the culinary as well as other luxuries of the day.

Another group of imports is formed by some of the metals and the manufactures thereof—mainly articles of domestic importance. Throughout the century there was a steady, if small importation of lead. This could have been altogether avoided if the local resources had been efficiently developed, as geologically, Ireland possesses fair supplies, although awkwardly distributed for purposes of modern working. But in those days more could have been produced from the Wicklow mines (comparatively better utilised in pre-Norman days) and from the ore found with silver. Thus it was not till as late as 1612 that the lead ore at Silver Mines, Co. Tipperary was properly exploited, and even then the full working was only carried on for a limited period. However, at least some use was made of the local stores in the sixteenth century and the amounts imported were never very large; such *plumbum* as was brought, is usually recorded in the Bridgewater and Bristol books. In 1504 it was estimated at £5 the ton.<sup>2</sup> As Ireland possessed no local stores of tin the import of *stagnum* was fully justified. This came from the Cornish mines via Bristol and Bridgewater, and not, as might be expected from the small Cornish ports, despite the nearness of some of these to the Stannaries. The amounts transported were not large and tin is comparatively rarely entered. At Bristol in 1504 it was valued at 30/- the hundred weight,<sup>3</sup> and later is described as both wrought and unwrought.

<sup>1</sup> Honey was more often an item in the Irish exports.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 142.      <sup>3</sup> *Ib.*

In addition to lead and tin the later books also bear witness to the bringing in of a little steel, brass and pewter in the unworked state for further utilisation in Ireland, but the greater proportion of these metals imported arrived in the form of made up goods. Even the early books constantly enumerate pounds of "batrie" or "battry," at about  $4\frac{1}{2}d.$  the pound,<sup>1</sup> and although the term includes the unworked material it was more generally applied to articles of metal (especially of brass or copper) wrought by hammering, i.e. battered into shape, and hence the name. Battry is still mentioned in the later records, and is sometimes designated as "kettle batry," which leaves no doubt as to its particular use, but the term becomes gradually rarer, for then it is also specified as pot, pan and crock brass. Brass was then a favourite metal for many articles destined to hard domestic usage, but at the end of the century pewter was coming into prominence for utensils of less strenuous wear.<sup>2</sup> Thus "drinking cuppes of pewter" are occasionally referred to, and pewter<sup>3</sup> and pewter goods are mentioned an increasing number of times. As was previously remarked there was a return trade in these goods, for being solid metal the scrap material could be utilised again and so among the Irish exports of the same date old pewter and brass pots and pans are to be found being sent back to England. Other important hard ware goods all occurring in the middle or late books are nails, both lath and latten (i.e. brass) tacks, hammers, awl blades, spokes, locks, padlocks, "henges" (hinges), keys, and chains for "keyes," snuffers, candle-

<sup>1</sup> Ib.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. The inventory of the goods of Nicholas Faggan, a Cork merchant, who died in 1578, and which contains a list of his most important domestic utensils. "One great brass pan, price 30/-; four small pans, 50/-; an old brewing pan, 30/-; an aquavitae pot, 30/-; 12 platters of pewter, 8/-; four pewter pots and two quart pots, 5/-; 9 pewter trenchers, 12/-; 6 porringers of pewter, 12d." R. Caulfield, *Council Book of Corporation of the City of Cork*, p. 1151.

<sup>3</sup> Ordinary pewter valued at 3d. a pound according to a Bridgewater entry. K.R.C.A. 38, 1591.

sticks, brasers, "drippinge pannes," frying pans, chafing dishes, shovels, scythes, taps and "cannels" (pipes or tubes and taps for casks), rapier blades, scabards and daggers.<sup>1</sup> Spoons and knives are found in the early books as well, the former at 10*d.* and the latter at about 6/8 the gross,<sup>2</sup> but while at first the choice in knives was limited to the one kind of *cultus*, later there is more variety with "smalle," "penye," pocket and "Almayne" knives. The last clearly indicates the country of origin and when dealing with these goods, it is interesting to remember that before England became the "workshop of the World" the British Isles looked to the hard ware manufactures of Germany for most cutlery and ironmongery goods, and for the raw steel and brass as well. These were, in fact, the commodities which the Merchant Adventurers exchanged for English cloths, as is described in a letter of contemporary date addressed to the Lords of East Friesland. "The English merchantes buy of them Renysh wyne, fustian, cotton wool, copper, copper wyre, iron, iron wyre, coprous, latten, brasse, kettles, steele of all kindes, of wares made in Norenburgh, harness of all sortes, gonnes, gonn powder, feild pikes, running staves for Norsmen, there is no kind of ware that Germany maketh or bringeth out, but generally the English merchant buyeth as much or more of yt as any other nation doe."<sup>3</sup> Small wonder that Burleigh was so eager to introduce these manufactures into England, but they continued to be the staple purchases of the Merchant Adventurers for most of the sixteenth century, whether their centre was at Antwerp, Emden, or Hamburg. From Bristol, Chester and Bridgewater they were re-exported to Ireland and the unknown proportion coming in the direct Irish-Flemish trade should also be recollected.

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Bristol K.R.C.A.  $\frac{199}{8}$  (1555),  $\frac{189}{8}$  (1556),  $\frac{23}{8}$  (1557),  $\frac{24}{1}$  (1590). Chester  $\frac{3}{1}$  (1585). Bridgewater  $\frac{29}{35-40}$  (1591). Cardiff K.R.P.B.  $\frac{1270}{9}$  (1594), etc.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. Bristol,  $\frac{199}{8}$  1504.

<sup>3</sup> W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, p. 225.



The backward position of the tanning industry in Ireland has been commented upon, consequently it is not surprising to find tanned skins and some of the more highly finished leather goods among the imports. Early in the century are recorded tanned calf skins, the *pelles vitulinum tannata* at 2/6 a dozen, *pelles aurei*, golden or prepared skins at sixpence each and "red leshe," red leather or cordiwan for cushions, which was presumably sold in strips as it is valued at 3/- a dozen. There are also actual "cushions," at 10*d.* each, and probably made up from the red leather.<sup>1</sup> Later entries show fewer imports of mere tanned skins, but they are occasionally supplemented by ones for "Spaynishe lether and buffe hydes" for saddles and harness accessories such as saddle trees, bits, bridles, spurs, horsebells, girth web, horse combs, etc.<sup>2</sup> The mention of saddles after 1550 or so is valuable in view of the fact that the Anglo-Irish were instructed to use them and not to ride on pillions as the natives did. An ordinance of 1534 orders that the "Inglisshrie worth £20 per year were to ryde in a saddele," but as with the wearing of mantles exception was granted in time of "warre."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, from the many dozens of pillions (valued at 6/8 the dozen)<sup>4</sup> entered in the early Bristol Accounts, their use was as popular among the "Inglisshrie" as the natives. According to Spenser, these pads or pillows without stirrups had originally been introduced by the English themselves at an early date. Whether the custom of stirrupless pillions was thus originated or not, at any rate it had become entirely characteristic of the country and was partly responsible for the generally admitted fine horsemanship of the Irish. As Spenser says, "Neither is the same uncomely . . . for I have heard some great warriors say that, in all the services which they had seen abroad in foreign countries,

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 142 Bristol, 1504.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Chester K.R.C.A. 315 and 316, 1585 and 1586, etc.

<sup>3</sup> C. S. P. in reign of Henry VIII, Vol. 2, part 3, p. 216,

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 142,

they never saw a more comely man than the Irishman . . . neither is his manner of mounting unseemly though he lack stirrups, but more ready than with stirrups, for in his getting up his horse is still going."<sup>1</sup> As the number of pillions,<sup>2</sup> imported through the Anglo-Irish trade, decreased during the century, it implies that the loyal townfolk, at least, ceased to use them and transferred their affections to saddles.

Another small but interesting class of imports is formed by writing materials, for the Tudor period marked a definite transition from the general employment of vellum to that of paper. This modernisation of writing utensils is even reflected in a contemporary Gaelic poem composed at some time between 1500 and 1600. A disgruntled bard seeking for consolation sings "Hasten towards me, my booklet, speckled writing of wholesome tales, part not from me, since all others are forsaking me. Come thou of the fair smooth pages, firmly stitched together. . . . Bring with thee, as thou comest, my pen-case, ready, clean, brilliant, filled with sharp, dart-like pens, limber-tipped, firm, newly-trimmed. Bring likewise paper and cushion under my hand whence writing is to percolate upon the smooth slope of the leaf, a fine script, jet-black, uniform."<sup>3</sup> The pen-case thus eulogised was doubtless similar to the penners valued in the Bristol books at a penny each.<sup>4</sup> These sheaths or cases might be made of metal, horn or leather, and could be carried at the girdle, sometimes being fitted with an inkhorn. Pens—presumably possessing all the virtues which the bard attributes to them—pen and inkhorns also occur in the Accounts as well as parchment in rolls<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Spenser, *View of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Pillion may also have been used in the sense of an ordinary cushion.

<sup>3</sup> *Studies*, Vol. XII, no. 48, p. 600 (December, 1923). Unpublished Irish poems translated by Osborn Bergin.

<sup>4</sup> K.R.C.A. 182.

<sup>5</sup> In a Chester book for 1585 "6 rolles of smale parchement" was valued at £3. (K.R.C.A. 111).

paper, this last being valued at 2/- a ream in 1504,<sup>1</sup> but rising to 2/8 by 1556.<sup>2</sup>

The remainder of the Irish imports are rather more miscellaneous in character and can only be grouped together in classes of comparatively minor importance. Thus the Middle and later Accounts contain occasional entries for varying quantities of the building materials, lime, pitch and tar,<sup>3</sup> and of the useful, if clumsy varieties of millstones known as helyngstones and dogstones. Since much of the corn grinding both in Irish and Anglo-Irish districts was done by hand, it is not surprising to find the import of such a domestic necessity as quern, or corn stones for this purpose, but the following rather exceptional entry for slade or dial stones is more remarkable. "The 9th of September, 1591. The Toby of Dublin burden 16 tonnes, Richard Lord master versus Dublyn. The same Richard Lord dothe enter in the same 1200lbs. waight slade stones. Val. £1 os. 0d. Sub. 1/-." <sup>4</sup> Some pottery and earthen wares are represented, for at intervals are mentioned cups and saucers, trenchers, earthen bottles, stone pots and many a harassed modern housewife might be glad of the "earthern pottes" which were valued at sixpence a dozen.<sup>5</sup> To these may be added wine and drinking glasses, this importation being contemporaneous with the export of glass from Waterford. "Roapes" both tarred and untarred, tow, hemp, twine, chalk, turpentine, glue and starch are likewise occasionally to be found, but at least Ireland shared in an attempt to set up the finishing processes in the manufacture of the last-named at home. According to the Irish Patent Rolls for the year 1590, a grant was given to "Richard Younge of London, his servants, factors, or deputies, as well Englishmen and denizens, as strangers, born

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ 2.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ 2.

<sup>3</sup> According to a Bristol book for 1557 tar was then valued at 3/4 a barrel, and pitch at 3/-. (K.R.C.A. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3).

<sup>4</sup> K.R.P.B. 1591.7 Padstow, 1591.

<sup>5</sup> K.R.C.A. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 Bridgewater, 1591.

under the dominion of any foreign prince in league and amity with her Majesty, for 7 years, to buy in any part beyond the seas, every sort of starch, and to import the same to any part of her Majesty's dominions for sale, in gros or retail." For seven years Young and his people were alone to have "the full and whole trade and traffick as well of merchandize as the manufacture of starch within the realm and dominions" provided that the starch made did not consist of wheat, except the bran of wheat. Further, Young was to cease his manufacture altogether, and within the space of twenty days, whenever the Lord Deputy and Council signified that it would be hurtful to the realm (i.e. when stores of grain were short).<sup>1</sup> Another familiar domestic necessity occurring in these later books is soap—most of which came either from Flanders or Spain, black, white "Castell" (Castile) and "Flemyshe" being the four chief varieties. An average value was about  $3\frac{1}{4}$  the stone.<sup>2</sup> Evidently the cards for winding and making wool on were not obtainable locally, for "cardes" at 5/- a dossen, woolcards and "stockcards" (to be distinguished from "stockardes," stockings) are found throughout the Accounts. Sometimes they were old ones returned for use again, judging from the dozens of "olde brayde Cardes" at  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  a dozen recorded in some books.<sup>3</sup> Finally among the imports of a purely luxurious character may be placed the playing cards, playing tables and dice sometimes mentioned towards the close of the century.

In conclusion a few extracts are given from the Accounts. It is hoped that these will bring more vividly before the mind's eye the actual nature of this much varied traffic; yet these are only representative of a comparatively limited portion of the detailed bills of lading. The first is illustrative of the trade in 1504

<sup>1</sup> C. P. and C. Rolls, Ire., Vol. II, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A.  $\frac{2}{3}$  Bridgewater, 1591.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. K.R.C.A.  $\frac{4}{3}$  Barnstaple, 1591.



and is chosen for its rather exceptional variety, but it need not be supposed that at that early date all merchants indulged in such a long list of the smaller goods. "Boat called the Mawdlen of Waterford of which William Pembroke is master, went out towards Ireland the 11th day of July and has in the same . . . John Dowlie native. Item. 2 smooth cloths. Custom 2/4. Item 2 pounds worked silk. Value 26/8. Subsidy 1/4. Item 2 pound quarters of saffron. Val. 15/- Sub. 9d. Item 50 pounds dyed cloth. Val. 16/8. sub. 10d. Item 2 dossen pillions. Val. 13/4. sub. 8d. Item, 5½ gross laces. Val. 5/6 sub. 3¼d. Item 50 batrie. Val. 20/- sub. 1/- . Item 1 dossen cards Val. 4/- . sub. 2½d.<sup>1</sup> Item 3 pair stockardes Val. 3/- sub. 1¾d.<sup>2</sup> Item 1 gross knives Val. 6/8. sub. 4d. Item 2 pounds pepper Val 2/- . sub. 2¼d. Item 1 pound cinamon. Val. 2/6 sub. 1½d. Item 1 pound ginger. Val. 1/- . sub. ½d. Item 1 pound grains Val. 10d. sub. ½d. Item 1 pound mace. Val 6d. sub. ¼d. Item 1 pound borax Val. 1/4 sub 3d. Item 3 pounds verdegrease. Val. 1/4 sub. ¾d. Item 1 pound thread. Val. 5d. sub. ¼d. Item 6 dossen thimbles Val. 1/- sub. ½d. Item 1½ clouts needles Val. 1/- sub. ¾d. Item 2 dossen aniseed Val. 3/- sub. 1¾d. . . .<sup>3</sup>

The second extract is illustrative of the development which had taken place by the middle of the century (1556). "The Mary of Deredaughe (Drogheda), James Williams master, went out the fourth day of August. Thomas Bathe, native for one ton of iron £8<sup>4</sup>, one gross penny knives 10/-, one gross laces 5/- 3 dozen "pragges" 4/2. 2 dozen "bombardes" 3/4, 4 dozen "almayne knyves 10/-," 2 pounds raw silk 12/4, 3 pounds pepper 5/-, half a pound "nuttemugges" 1/8, one dozen "brasers" 1/8, one small gross bowstrings 2/6, one ream paper 2/8, 2 small gross garters 1/4, 6 dozen leather belts 5/-, one burden steel 4/-, one dozen

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Woolcards.    <sup>2</sup> Stockings.    <sup>3</sup> K.R.C.A. 149<sup>2</sup> Bristol, 1504.

<sup>4</sup> This and the similar figures are for the values, custom being rated at 1/- in the pound.

pillions 16/8. one small gross combs 5/-. 6 pounds licorice 1/-, one thousand clasps 10*d.*, one pound "anglettes" 6*d.*, 2 pounds red wax 1/4, 2 dozen "premiers 3/-," 2 dozen pairs of spurs 5/-, 2 dozen "powches 16/8," 2 gross silk buttons 3/5, 6 dozen "plaiing cardes 10/-," 2 bolts of thread 6/8, one dozen gloves 2/-, 6 pounds comenseed 1/-. 4½ pounds "reasons and courrans 9*d.*" 2 pounds sugar candye 1/8. 200 alblades 1/4. 2 dozen "cheapes (chapes) for swords 1/-." . . . Total value £15-9-5. Subsidy 15/5¾.<sup>1</sup>

The following shows the further developments of the last two decades of the century, but as few individual values are given for the goods, comparisons of price throughout this chapter have been rendered impossible, in most cases, for a greater range than the first half of the century. "The 20th of October 1585. In the Peter of Wallezey, burden 14 tonnes the Master James Johnson frayed for Carlingford. Rychard Weston one fardell bayes continentes 2 dossen, one hundred and half anelsede, one hundred allam, 12 stune bottells, one hundred stune pottes, twoe grosse hampers (continentes) one hundred white cuppes, one quarter currans, one hundretes madder, 3 groce knyves, one pound and half of saffron, and 3 firkins of sope. Valued at £16."<sup>2</sup> "The 26th daye (Oct.). In the Barke Brooke of Bristoll of the burthen of forty tonnes. Christopher Tayler master for Corck. Stephen Skyddy of Corke merchant for two hundred of hopps, one hundred of licoris, one dozen of urinalls, thre dossen of woll cardes, one groce of penny knives, two reames of paper, three dozen of penny girdles, one pound of fenell seed, one pound of comenseed, one thousand of lath nayles, half a thousand of board nayles, half a hundred of orchell, a dossen yeardes of cotten, twelve pound of turpentine, one groce of trenchers, two groce of glasse buttons, one pound of verdigrease, one pound of quicksilver, two dossen of

<sup>1</sup> K.R.C.A. 129 Bristol 1556-7.

<sup>2</sup> K.R.C.A. 138 Chester, 1585.

cullen paires, one dossen of a ?, half a dozen of brushes, six yeardes of Canvas, one pound of black thred, a quarter of a C. of black sope, two pound of red nayles, three dossen of thimbles, one burthen of steele, two pair of playinge tables, eight yeardes of dornix, one dossen of candlestickes and half a groce of combes." Subsidy 6/11½d. therefore value was about £7 os. 0d.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K.R.P.B. 11<sup>31</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Bristol, 1591.

## CHAPTER XIII

### CONCLUSION

OWING to the unsatisfactory nature of some of the material from which information could be obtained, it is hard to draw very definite conclusions about certain aspects of Anglo-Irish trade in the sixteenth century. For example, the lack of the Irish Customs' Accounts, and the irregularity of the English, make it impossible to arrive at a complete total for the trade of even one year—the exports and imports at a few of the English ports can be discovered, but not a national total. Then again, the same difficulty prevents the acquisition of exact knowledge of the actual movements in the balance of trade at the end of the century. However, a few general observations can be made from the contents of the former chapters, and these may provide a summary of at least a few of the most important features.

As regards the general nature of the exports and imports one remark has to be repeated : Ireland's exports were mainly raw materials—valuable necessities for the rest of the world—while her imports, with the exception of salt and iron, were luxuries of varying degrees of importance. This statement is true of the whole period under survey (as indeed, in some measure, it still remains true to-day), but the contrast between the character of the items of export and import becomes more marked with each succeeding decade of the century. This was, of course, a natural result of the political reaction on Ireland's economic life, but it was also due to the great growth in the use of the minor luxuries of life, the increase in the employment of the accessories of civilisation which the Elizabethan age witnessed both on the



Continent and in England, and which was duly reflected in Ireland by the Anglo-Irish residents there. Consequently, while the major portion of the Irish exports to England were real products of the country, a corresponding portion of her imports from England were virtually English re-exports, luxury articles whose origin was mainly Continental. This factor in the general nature of Irish trade was partly responsible for the bitterness displayed by English economic interests, as exemplified by the author of the *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, or Sir Humphrey Gilbert. What lay at the root of their grievance, was that at the time English merchants possessed comparatively little hold on Ireland's commerce. They wanted her products because they were useful at home, or for re-export, yet they could supply her with little that she really needed, and had to face the competition of Continental traders in the sale of their virtual re-exports. The beginning of the Tudor period thus saw Ireland as a creditor country with the markets of Europe, and especially of Spain, willingly open for the purchase of her fish, her hides and her beeves, and thus able to obtain the luxuries which she choose to buy in return on comparatively favourable terms. This freedom of trade was the result of the fifteenth century semi-independence and practical exemption from economic regulations, whether of purely English mercantile origin, or in favour of the Anglo-Irish interests in Ireland. As has already been pointed out, this comparative prosperity was the outcome of a more natural mode of procedure, when, for the time being both the peaceful members of the native Irish community and the Anglo-Irish of the towns and Pale joined in commerce. But this independence was bound to be interfered with as soon as the trading interests in England were again strong enough to put forward and enforce their views. This happened during the Elizabethan regime, and to the mercantile desire to keep the profits of all possible branches of commerce in

English hands was added a very natural political dislike of the native Irish intercourse with France and Spain. This explains the attempts to put down the traffic with Spanish fishing fleets off the southern and western coasts and the direct trading abroad. Unfortunately, allied with internal warfare, the interference with the normal course of trade, tended, not to transfer the profits, but to extinguish the actual trade itself. Hence the complaints of those settlers at the end of the century who found the acquisition of wealth more troublesome than they had at first anticipated.

This is true of some aspects of the economic situation, but at the same time the mercantilist policy—from the English point of view—was fairly successful in the attainment of its objects in other directions. Thus while the Continental commerce of the southern and western cities declined, the practical subordination of Irish to English economic interests is to be seen in the rise of the north-eastern Irish towns, whose prosperity was entirely dependent on their English trade. In other circumstances their increased importance would have been a sign of natural and healthy expansion, but in point of fact they indicate the unfortunate power which England was to wield in the seventeenth century to the detriment of the independent growth of Ireland's economic interests. In Elizabeth's reign this subordination is especially seen in the excessive export of linen yarn for the convenience of the Lancashire cloth makers, but to the detriment of the native industry. A summary of Chester's trade in 1588, which is given in the Appendix, is illustrative of this statement, and while the export of hundreds of packs of yarn, to the value of many thousands of pounds, was for the time being the essence of the trade in Drogheda, Dundalk and Carlingford, the production of cloth, even if only of half the same valuation, would have been really better for the country. In the next century the same process is seen in the woollen trade, but with even more lastingly

evil results, for the enforced export of the raw material to England alone, and the forbidden export of the worked-up product well nigh killed the one Irish industry which had survived so many vicissitudes. Instead, therefore, of a definite increase in the number of local manufactures, there was, even during the sixteenth century, a relative falling off, particularly noticeable in the linen and allied cloth making. Whether Ireland, in more favourable circumstances, would have kept pace with the industrial progress of the age, both on the Continent and in England, is very doubtful. Most probably she would not have attained quite the same standard, but there is no reason why she should not have successfully maintained and expanded very considerably those few forms for which there were the resources at hand and a proven national aptitude. The actual pecuniary loss of the time was not of such permanent consequence as the check to the natural development of the manufacturing habits of the people, for although the over-industrialisation of a community has its attendant sociological evils, the opposite extreme is equally harmful in a different way. However beneficially agriculture may occupy the first place in a country, a certain measure of industrial life is essential for real prosperity, and to provide sufficient occupation to support an increasing population. Unfortunately as a result of the Tudor and Stuart mercantile policy, Ireland suffered from under-industrialisation, but even by the end of Elizabeth's reign the bad effects of the tendency are to be seen. Judging from the bills of lading in the Custom's Accounts and Port Books belonging to the late years of the century, the populace depended more and more on the import of what were mainly semi-luxurious or luxurious wares, and these were paid for by the export of raw linen yarn and wool-fells, which should have been worked up at home. In point of fact Chester Accounts for three years show relatively less local industry than the early Bristol books, for it is very doubtful whether the quantity of cadows

and blankets entered, represents the same proportion of work as the hundreds of mantles transported earlier. Moreover, as the demand for raw material from Ireland increased, and the home industry failed to keep pace with the manufacturing developments abroad, so the home markets for the coarser goods were increasingly swamped by the foreign wares. This vicious circle could have been checked by the normal action of native interests, but these were powerless against the strength of the English mercantile policy, especially as this state of affairs was peculiarly favourable to the English traders. Indeed, in this connection it is interesting to note how during the end of the sixteenth and great part of the seventeenth centuries, Irish trade was the backbone of the commerce of Chester and Liverpool. That with Scotland, the Isle of Man, or France is almost negligible compared with the traffic to Dublin in luxury wares and the return trade, especially from Drogheda, in such necessities as yarn, fells and tallow. Naturally in the next century English merchants were anxious to maintain the same state of affairs by preventing the growth of any enterprise which might lessen the extent of their market ; but needless to remark such a course of events was scarcely conducive to Irish prosperity. In America the same policy brought about the War of Independence, in Ireland the suppression of a legitimate economic outlet for the energies of the people, accentuated political unrest.

As regards the items of trade in detail, it has been shown that the prosperity of the fishing traffic declined owing to various causes, one being the increasing importance of the Newfoundland banks, which attracted the European fleets and which apparently coincided with the disappearance of the best shoals from the Irish coast. It is hard to estimate how far the foreign fish trade declined, but, apart from restrictions, the French and Spanish fleets probably found it advisable to visit the Irish coasts less frequently. The export of fish to



England was naturally affected by the state of the country, especially as it was the south-western towns which did most of the trade, and they suffered most from the Elizabethan wars. The late Bristol books are rather unsatisfactory, but from what they record, the quantities of fish brought from Ireland do not compare favourably with those in Accounts belonging to the middle and early century.

The Anglo-Irish export of hides suffered comparatively less severely. The transport of otter and marten skins, and indeed of most fells from the impoverished Munster provinces, fell away, but their failure was partially recompensed by the increase in the number of cow, calf, goat and kid fells sent from round Dublin, Drogheda and Dundalk. The expansion of the traffic in the other domestic fells, i.e. the woolfells proper, sheep and lamb, has just been referred to, as well as the reaction on the woollen cloth industry. The Continental position of the exports, however, must have definitely declined, since in that respect the decreased prestige of Galway, Cork, and Waterford was not replaced by the new power of the north-eastern municipalities.

The remaining items of export can best be summarised under two main headings, those which show a new or enhanced importance by the close of the Tudor period, and those which show a decline. To the first group belong timber, glass, tallow, victuals such as beef and pork, and live cattle; to the latter, hawks, horses, hounds and corn. The increase in the quantity of timber transported to England is another instance of the working of the English mercantile system, rather to the detriment of Ireland's welfare. The steady depletion of the English woods and forests for domestic and industrial purposes (especially the smelting of iron) was felt to endanger the national bulwark—ship-building—and hence the proposals to use the Irish woods, since their destruction would not only make it harder for the rebels to hide, but would help to conserve the English resources.

It was with this plea that Raleigh pressed his license for the cutting of planks and pipe staves in Munster ; but even he fell foul of the regulations which forbade the export of timber abroad, lest it should reach Spain. Thus it appears that considerable quantities were habitually sent to the Continent, and Elizabethan restrictions naturally endeavoured to confine the transport to England. Comparatively little harm was done in the sixteenth century, but the principle was unfortunate, and productive of very bad results in the seventeenth century, when to increased export, was added the excessive encouragement of iron-smelting forges, so that Munster "of the oak-clad plains" was soon unable to produce sufficient oak-bark for the local tanners. This again was the result of the subordination of Ireland's economic interests, for no really representative native administration could have allowed matters to come to such a pass. And thus, if at first glance the increase in the Anglo-Irish export of wood seems beneficial, it cannot be weighed against the decline of the cloth industry, for while the latter constituted a natural outlet for the use of the raw material, the former entailed a drain on one of the most valuable national resources. The rise of the glass industry comes under a different category, since it meant the production of a high grade article, giving considerable employment for the comparatively small amount of wood used. Indeed, there is no reason, considering Ireland's natural advantages in the possession of supplies of kelp and other ingredients, why glass making should not have formed one of her staple industries, and, with provision for replanting, have done her timber no harm. In the short time that the manufacture survived untrammelled, Cork and Waterford glass acquired fame ; and yet it is interesting to note that the principal reason put forward in favour of Longe's patent was that the destruction of the Irish woods would not matter. Later (1746), when English manufacturers desired to enlarge their market, an embargo on the export of Irish

glass soon hampered the once-flourishing enterprise, and it only required the Famine to complete its collapse.

The rise of the small scrap-metal traffic in old pewter and brass is mainly of note as complementary to the increased use and import of the wrought materials for domestic utensils. More important are the greater quantities of tallow, both rough and rendered, sent to Chester from Drogheda, Dundalk and Carlingford. They take the place of the wax exported to Bristol in earlier years from the Munster ports. The more frequent entries for beef and pork are also interesting, as indicating the place which these commodities were to take in the Irish trade of the next century, and especially in that which arose with the West Indies—only in its turn to be crushed when it appeared likely to endanger the monopoly of English enterprise. But in Elizabeth's reign that fate was yet far distant, and the beginnings of a fair provision trade in meat to the great centres, Bristol and Chester, are cheerful signs amidst other depressing symptoms. The entries for "quick kine" likewise indicate the embryo live cattle trade. Yet in some ways these last items are sad reading, for they represent the output of less industrial energy than the export of cured meat, or of corn, and point to an increase of pure pasturage at the expense of tillage, which is not an altogether healthy change in agricultural conditions.

This change is further evidenced by a general decline in the corn traffic, and although it is hard to speak very definitely about a commodity subject to such seasonal fluctuations, it is difficult to come to any other conclusion. According to Spenser, the native Irish were "great ploughers and small spenders of corn,"<sup>1</sup> so that whenever possible, export continued, even during the worst years of the period, but there are various indications that this was not on the same scale as in earlier times. The policy of destruction pursued by the rebels and royal army alike, of destroying tilled areas in order

<sup>1</sup> Spenser, *View of Ireland*, ed. H. Morley, p. 179.

to hamper each other's food supplies, coupled with wholesale devastation, such as took place in Munster, forced many tracts out of cultivation. Shipments of corn still found their way to the Continent, but they can scarcely be regarded as purely surplus consignments, since at the same time the loyal towns were often begging for import licenses to prevent starvation. Army requisitions became more difficult to obtain, mainly, perhaps, because of the insecurity of payment, but also because in many districts there was a very real scarcity. There was still some transport to England—witness that to Chester in 1588—but, even taking into account the possibility of some unrecorded cargoes in bulk, the devastated state of the country prevented Ireland any longer from being the “granary of Europe.”

The same factors which militated against the production of corn were injurious to the breeding of hawks, hounds and horses, although to a less serious degree, as excessive export in the fifteenth century had already drained the country both of hawks and greyhounds. But even the restriction of their export as a special matter of license could not save their gradual extinction, when a constant state of war prevented the natives, who possessed the art of rearing them, from peaceful opportunities to continue their breeding. According to all accounts there was a great scarcity of horses by the end of the century, and, as in the case of corn, this scarcity was both real and artificial, being partly caused by the fear of requisitions and also by the precarious livelihood of the native breeders. Fortunately, however, the rearing of horses did not suffer the same permanent collapse as that of the once-famous Irish hawks and hounds.

Little need be said of the imports in detail, as the most important features have already been referred to at the beginning of this chapter, the introduction of the New Draperies and the increase in the variety of small wares of all descriptions—mercery, millinery, haber-



dashery and hardware goods—being the most noticeable. The consumption of foreign wines, though on a lower scale, continued, but to the home manufacture of uisquebaugh was added that of beer, whence the greater import of hops and malt from Chester during the last decades of Elizabeth's reign. There was also a development in the use of coal, especially in Dublin, partly owing to the lack of wood in the surrounding districts, and partly owing to the fact that it was becoming the fashionable fuel for domestic use in England. Indeed, with regard to most of the later imports it may be observed that they had become more the necessities of a class than of the nation as a whole, and in this respect present rather a contrast to those of the beginning of the century. The native Irish were no longer in such a powerful position for trade and the luxury imports mainly represented the demands of the government officials and Anglo-Irish residents. Thus Cogan's report in 1611 showed the preponderance of the transport of these wares to Dublin, where a sale for them existed, and in a lesser degree to Waterford and Cork, but the old centres for distribution to the countryside, Dungarvan, Kinsale and Ross, were no longer of consequence.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to go deeply into the extensive question of coinage and mines, but so far as the general state of the currency affected trading conditions, it is advisable to say a few words. Up to the fifteenth century the coins—such as they were—in both England and Ireland were of equal values, but about the middle of the century the process of debasing the Irish coinage began. Thus bullion which yielded 37/6 in England was made to give 44/- in Ireland, and Henry VII continued the process, so that 3/- Irish were only equivalent to 2/- English. At the opening of the sixteenth century the currency was further degraded by the prevalence of the evil of clipping, and was, moreover, very scarce.<sup>2</sup> When

<sup>1</sup> C. Car. MSS. VI, pp. 174-6.

<sup>2</sup> J. Simon, *An Essay towards an Historical Account of Irish Coins*, p. 32.

Henry VIII exchanged his title of "dominus" for "Rex Hiberniæ," he ordered a new copper currency for Ireland, but to help his financial embarrassments the metal of these groats was base and an English act forbade their importation from Ireland.<sup>1</sup> In 1544 and 1546 other coins, sixpences, threepences, and  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  and  $\frac{3}{4}d.$  pieces were issued, but still of a debased type.<sup>2</sup> In the first year of his reign Edward VI. gave Martyn Piri an indenture for the coinage, in Dublin, of groats, half groats, pennies and halfpennies at the rate of 144 groats to the pound, and in 1551, the last year of his reign, he commanded that the Irish groats which had too much brass alloy should only pass for  $2d.$ <sup>3</sup> This attempt to force the course of bad coins by proclamation raised a storm of opposition. Hitherto, although the Irish currency had been lower than the English, the  $4d.$  groat had been taken to equal the  $6d.$  Irish, and there had at least been some certainty in the rate, so that adjustments could be arranged. But the proclamation caused infinite confusion by flooding the country with base money of uncertain value. Traders with England had no means of conducting their exchange, since the Irish coinage was thus only available for local use. But it was the members of the government and the soldiers who suffered most from the consequent rise in prices. As Lord Deputy Croft wrote to the Marquis of Winchester, in 1552, "The Yrishmen ar in best case, for he hath least nede of money, he careth onely for his bealy and that not delicately—We that ar stipendiaries must lyve upon our stipends, and by with our money which no man esteemithe."<sup>4</sup> The year before Deputy Croft wrote to Northumberland expressing the view that he failed to see why Ireland should have worse money than England,<sup>5</sup> and the reply that he received from the Privy Council is illustrative of the spirit in which such matters

<sup>1</sup> J. Lindsay, *A View of Irish Coinage*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> *S. P. Ire.*, Mary, Vol. 4, no. 31.

<sup>5</sup> *C. S. P. Ire.*, 1509-73, p. 118.

were ordered from London. He was instructed to remind the Irish Council that the main consideration they were to keep in view was the King's good, and not what they desired for Ireland's convenience. Thus they were to examine whether, from this point of view, it was expedient for the Irish currency to be of equal value with that in England. Also whether it was profitable for the King, and not for the people, or for the people, but not for the King? Further, if it was a loss to the King, whether it could be recompensed from the mining profits.<sup>1</sup> To this Croft very sensibly replied that the Irish Council were persuaded that the same reasons which favoured fine money in England, should also serve for Ireland. The representatives from Dublin, Waterford, Limerick, Cork and Drogheda, who had been called to debate on the general disorder prevalent since the "crying down" of Irish money in England, all attributed it to that cause. They also argued that money was for "none other use, but for exchange," and should be of the value proclaimed, "Yt followeth not—that we sholde esteme anything otherwyse than reason wolde we did esteme it. Yf we wolde use leade to make armour or edge tooles, our labour were in vayne. Yf we sholde use iron to make monney, it wolde—ruste, canker, break, and be fylthie," and that consequently silver and gold were the natural materials for money, and should be so used in fair proportion.<sup>2</sup> The above arguments are interesting as showing that Irish public opinion was alive to the dangers of a debased currency, even if it was not in their power to prevent it, and recall the fact that as early as the reign of Henry VIII Baron Finglas had advised the equality of the coinage in his Breviate for the better governance of Ireland.<sup>3</sup> Mercifully the protestations of the Deputy and Irish Council were comparatively successful for once, and in the next year, when the disorganisation continued to be as bad as ever, the

<sup>1</sup> S. P. Ire., Edward VI, Vol. 3, no. 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* no. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Harris, *Hibernica*, p. 49.

obnoxious proclamation was withdrawn, and trade immediately revived.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the bad results of Edward VI's experiment and the obvious harm which the inferior money did in Ireland—if only in inconveniencing the government officials—Elizabeth also clung to the false policy of trying to economise by continued debasing of her Irish coinage. That of 1558 was made from the base money then current in England, at the rate of 40/- to the pound troy and only three ounces fine.<sup>2</sup> In 1561 there was an improved but small issue, 9*d.* Irish being equivalent to 1/- English<sup>3</sup> It would have been well had Elizabeth pursued the same policy of raising the standard of the currency which so increased her prestige in England, but in 1598 and 1601 the Irish issues were as base as that of 1558, only three ounces being fine to nine ounces alloy. Moreover, while the base coinage of 1558 amounted to 20,000 pounds weight and those of 1598 and 1601 to 90,000 pounds weight, the fine money of 1601 was only 3,000 pounds weight.<sup>4</sup> Thus in addition to all the other causes of depression, the end of her reign showed an overwhelming proportion of base to fine money in the country, and no laws can prevent the value of money from depending on the quantity of bullion in it. So base indeed was her Irish currency that in 1604 James I was forced to declare that these coins should only go for one-third their nominal value.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, considering the general state of the Irish currency in the sixteenth century, it is marvellous that trade survived as it did. The continuance of exterior commercial relations was really made possible by the action of the merchants themselves, and by the fact that for a great part of the century Ireland was a creditor country, so that Spanish and other foreign coins came in, and were used in the towns enjoying Continental inter-

<sup>1</sup> R. Bagwell, *Ire. under the Tudors*, p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> J. Lindsay, *A View of Irish Coinage*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 52.      <sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 53.      <sup>5</sup> *Ib.* p. 53.



course. All the trade that could be carried on by the process of barter was so conducted and merchants made their own conventions with regard to much of the currency, certain coins being refused, while others were accepted at arbitrary rates.<sup>1</sup> Such a state of affairs was very inconvenient, but owing to the general strength of Ireland's commercial position, the worst effects were successfully avoided by private manœuvring, especially during the first half of the century. The crisis brought about by the proclamation of 1551 shows how impossible the situation became when a too rigid policy was enforced by law. Nevertheless the depression of the end of the century, with its falling trade balance, was enhanced by the inferior issue of 1558, while the issues of 1598 and 1601 added enormously to the difficulties of the early seventeenth century.

Throughout the Tudor period spasmodic efforts were made to work the mines of gold and silver in Ireland at a profit. Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth all hoped thereby to supply the mint, and to make up for their general expenditure on Irish affairs. Unfortunately they were doomed to disappointment, and it appears that the failures were due partly to over-estimation of the value of the mines, and partly to mismanagement. Thus the *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye* refers to the bullion in glowing terms :

“ For of sylvere and golde there is the oore,  
Among the wylde Yrishe, though they be pore,  
For they ar rude, and can therone no skylle ; ”

and goes on to relate that a London jeweller brought over some gold :

<sup>1</sup> cf. Order of the Privy Council in Ireland, 1560 : “ Wheare it is geven to understande us . . . that dyvers . . . persons within this realme do in the uttering of their wares, victuailles and other kynde of thinges vendable indente and bargaine afor they make any price of such thinges as they will sell what kind of coignes they will receyve for payment, whereby they procure . . . a greate disfurniture of all markettes,” and therefore the practise was forbidden. (Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep. 15, App. part 3, p. 116). Also enactments to prevent the better coin from being exported. (Ib. p. 117).

"Wherof was fyned metalle goode and clene,  
That at the touche, no bettere coude be sene."<sup>1</sup>

The same optimism about the supplies of the precious metals in Ireland prevailed in the sixteenth century, and certainly the experts sent to examine the mines in 1546 rather inclined to the same opinion.<sup>2</sup> On the strength of their reports, Germans, then supposed to be the best workers for the purpose, were employed under Joachim Grundalfinger,<sup>3</sup> but in 1552 Robert Record, Surveyor of the Mines, wrote to the Privy Council declaring that their proportion of wastage in washings, wastings, meltings, and finings was excessive, and that Englishmen and Irishmen would be better. He hoped to save £2,000 yearly and to gain more when the mines were deeper. Some idea of the extravagant way in which the project was worked may be gathered from the fact that, while the costs were £260 a month, the profits were only £40.<sup>4</sup> Nor did Elizabeth's efforts succeed much better, and the patentees to whom she gave private grants, such as John Challoner and Walter Pepparde, spent more time in quarrelling over their respective rights, than in exploiting their resources, either at Lambay Island or Clonmines.<sup>5</sup> Quite possibly the royal attempts could have been made profitable if the work had been carried on more steadily, and less ambitiously at first. Still, it has to be remembered that the better seams in the Wicklow districts were probably exhausted in pre-Christian days, and too much was expected from the less easily reached seams which remained.

<sup>1</sup> *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, ed. Sir G. Warner, pp. 35-6.

<sup>2</sup> "Thomas Agarde of Irlande, Garret Harman of the citie of London, goldsmith, and oone, Hans a Dutchman."—Acts of the Privy Council (England), 1542-7, p. 502.

<sup>3</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1509-73, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 132. But cf. fact that complaints were made against Record and decay of mines attributed to him. (*Ib.* p. 124).

<sup>5</sup> S. P. Ire. Eliz. Vol. 8, no. 51, and Vol. 10, nos. 54 and 63. Several of these volumes of State Papers are almost entirely devoted to the subject of mines in Ireland.

Finally, attention must be drawn to the subject of shipping, although apart from the evidence obtainable in the Custom's Accounts and Port Books, there is very scanty information indeed to be found. George O'Connor states that the bulk of Ireland's trade was foreign, and was carried on by the towns in their own ships, while the ports on the east coast possessed great numbers of vessels.<sup>1</sup> This summary is certainly borne out by the Accounts, which show that Cork, Waterford, Wexford, Ross, Dungarvan, Kinsale and Youghal were quite capable of transporting a very fair proportion of their goods in their own craft. This fact is illustrated in the accompanying tables, where shipping has been taken as the main basis of compilation. As might be expected, the decreased prosperity of the ports towards the close of the period is also reflected in their shipping capacity, and especially by a decline in that of Ross, Dungarvan, Kinsale and Youghal. According to the State Papers there is another reason for this, since about 1589 many Irish vessels were sold to Spain,<sup>2</sup> a fact which naturally provided yet another motive for disliking the Hiberno-Spanish intercourse. Perhaps it was the incessant restrictions and fear of loss while their vessels lay idle that prompted many merchants to take this way of ensuring immediate profits, and certainly after that date there were fewer boats available for foreign trade. Thus in 1600 Sir George Carew reported to the English Privy Council that most of the Irish merchants (except those of Waterford) sent their goods to Spain in French ships,<sup>3</sup> and Pelham declared that the Spaniards insisted on Galway traders taking away their purchases in "Stranger's bottoms, which I take to be a device to make many able pilots for this coast."<sup>4</sup> Waterford and Wexford were the only towns which kept up the numbers

<sup>1</sup> G. O'Connor, *Elizabethan Ireland*, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. P. Ire., 1588-92, p. 347.

<sup>3</sup> C. Car. MSS., III, p. 470.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* II, p. 228 (1580). Presumably in preparation for the Armada, but ultimately of little avail.

of their craft at all successfully, for in 1598, Hogan declared that they had more ships than all Ireland besides.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Wexford it was a matter of necessity, for few English or foreign vessels were small enough to navigate her barred haven, and so even in her decline her citizens were forced to maintain a fleet of low tonnaged vessels. In 1610 Barnaby Rich condemned Dublin for the lack of locally owned craft,<sup>2</sup> but even in 1588 the tendency can be observed in the Chester trade. Indeed it is only necessary to compare the Bristol table for 1504 and the Bridgewater table for 1560, with that of Chester for 1588, to see that Irish shipping followed much the same depressing course as did her trade in general during the sixteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> *Des. of Ire.*, 1598, ed. E. Hogan, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Barnaby Rich, *A New Des. of Ire.*, p. 69.



## APPENDIX

Tables showing examples of statistics from three Custom's Accounts. N.B. These are only examples and cannot be considered as entirely representative of the series.

BRISTOL, 1504-1505, (K.R.C.A.,  $\frac{199}{1}$  WHOLE YEAR)

### IRISH EXPORTS

|                    | English<br>Vessels.          | Irish<br>Vessels.            | Total.                       | Remarks.  |
|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Number of Vessels. | 82                           | 39                           | 121                          | Waterford 13,<br>Kinsale 7, Cork<br>6, Ross 4, Wex-<br>ford 3, Youghal<br>2, Misc. 4. |
| CARGO:             |                              |                              |                              |   |
| FISH.              |                              |                              |                              |   |
| White herrings—    |                              |                              |                              |   |
| Lasts              | 170½                         | 46                           | 216½                         | £3 a last.  |
| Barrels            | 973½                         | 1,582½                       | 2,556                        | 5/- a barrel.   |
| Mease              | 161                          | —                            | 161                          | 5/- a mease.  |
| Red herrings—      |                              |                              |                              |   |
| Mease              | 98½                          | 345                          | 443½                         | 5/- a mease.  |
| Per 100            | 300                          | 400                          | 700                          | 1/- a 100.  |
| Salmon—            |                              |                              |                              |   |
| Pipes              | 215½                         | 73½                          | 289½                         | £1 10s. 0d. a pipe,<br>includes firkins or<br>quarter pipes.                          |
| Hake—              |                              |                              |                              |   |
| No.                | 33,961                       | 57,038                       | 90,999                       | 10/- a 100.   |
| Salt fish—         |                              |                              |                              |   |
| Burdens            | 503                          | 237                          | 740                          | 3/4 a burden.   |
| No.                | 450                          | 600                          | 1,050                        | £1 per 100.   |
| Eels—              |                              |                              |                              |   |
| Barrels            | 2½                           | 2                            | 4½                           | 6/8 a barrel.   |
| Seals—             |                              |                              |                              |   |
| No.                | 1                            | ½                            | 1½                           | 6/8 each.   |
| Porpoise—          |                              |                              |                              |   |
| Barrels            | —                            | 2                            | 2                            | 5/- a barrel.   |
| Pollock            |                              |                              |                              |   |
| No.                | —                            | 250                          | 250                          | 5/- a 100 (from<br>Dingle).   |
| Values             | £   s.   d.<br>1,402   1   6 | £   s.   d.<br>1,063   3   2 | £   s.   d.<br>2,465   4   8 |   |

## 214 ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN 16TH CENTURY

## BRISTOL, 1504-1505—(Continued)

## IRISH EXPORTS—(Continued)

| CARGO :                            | English<br>Vessels. | Irish<br>Vessels.  | Total.                                       | Remarks.     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--|--------------|
| <b>FELLS, SKINS<br/>AND HIDES.</b> |                     |                    |  |              |
| Sheep No. 15,300                   | 40,712              | 56,012             | Average 10/- a<br>100, some at 8/4<br>a 100. |              |
| Lamb " 6,889                       | 26,824              | 33,713             | 5/- a 100.                                   |              |
| Marten " 5                         | 19                  | 24                 | 1/- each.                                    |              |
| Otter " 44                         | 24                  | 68                 | 5d. each.                                    |              |
| Wolf " 103                         | 295                 | 398                | 1½d. each.                                   |              |
| Fawn ? —                           | ½                   | ½?                 | Value 1/3.                                   |              |
| Rabbit No. —                       | 100                 | 100                | 5/- a 100.                                   |              |
| Calf " —                           | 100                 | 100                | 25/- a 100.                                  |              |
| Wildskins " —                      | 50                  | 50                 | 2½d. each.                                   |              |
| Salt skins " 735                   | 391                 | 1,126              | 1/4 each, 13/4 a<br>dicker.                  |              |
| Values                             | £ s. d.<br>144 5 3½ | £ s. d.<br>302 2 7 | £ s. d.<br>446 7 10½                         |              |
| <b>Wool Flocks—<br/>Stones</b>     | 88                  | 89                 | 177  | 5d. a stone. |
| Values                             | £ s. d.<br>1 16 8   | £ s. d.<br>1 17 1  | £ s. d.<br>3 13 9                            |              |
| <b>CLOTH AND<br/>MANTLES.</b>      |                     |                    |  |              |
| Frieze Yards 6                     | 104                 | 110                | About 4½d. a yd.                             |              |
| Checks " 70                        | 841                 | 911                | About £2 a 100<br>yards.                     |              |
| Checkkars " —                      | 10                  | 10                 | 4d. a yd.                                    |              |
| Whitelles No. 2                    | 14                  | 16                 | ¾ and 2 at 1/4<br>each.                      |              |
| Linen Panni 1,850                  | 1,925               | 3,775              | 10/- a 100 panni.                            |              |
| " Yards —                          | 75                  | 75                 | About 1d. a yd.                              |              |
| Mantles No. 507                    | 1,813               | 2,320              | ¾ each.                                      |              |
| Values                             | £ s. d.<br>95 7 8   | £ s. d.<br>336 5 5 | £ s. d.<br>431 13 1                          |              |
| <b>FATS.</b>                       |                     |                    |  |              |
| Wax Lbs. 1,050                     | 3,342½              | 4,392½             | About 4½d. a lb.                             |              |
| White Wax " 400                    | 100                 | 500                | ¾ a 100.                                     |              |
| Tallow " 100                       | —                   | 100                | 6/8 a 100.                                   |              |
| Values                             | £ s. d.<br>18 10 0  | £ s. d.<br>62 11 6 | £ s. d.<br>81 1 6                            |              |

## BRISTOL, 1504-1505—(Continued)

## IRISH EXPORTS—(Continued)

| CARGO :  |        | English Vessels. | Irish Vessels.    | Total.            | Remarks.                        |
|----------|--------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| CORN     | Weyes  | 1½               | —                 | 1½                | £1 10s. 0d. a wey.<br>1/- a lb. |
| Malt     | Lbs.   | 80               | —                 | 80                |                                 |
| Values   |        | £ s. d.<br>6 5 0 | —                 | £ s. d.<br>6 5 0  |                                 |
| WOOD     | Boards | —                | 100               | 100               | 16/8 a 100.                     |
|          | No.    | —                |                   |                   |                                 |
| Values   |        | —                | £ s. d.<br>0 16 8 | £ s. d.<br>0 16 8 |                                 |
| ANIMALS. |        |                  |                   |                   |                                 |
| Hawks    | No.    | 5                | 4                 | 9                 | 10/- to £1 each.<br>£1 each.    |
| Horses   | "      | 3                | —                 | 3                 |                                 |
| Values   |        | £ s. d.<br>7 0 0 | £ s. d.<br>7 0 0  | £ s. d.<br>14 0 0 |                                 |
| MISC.    | Values | £ s. d.<br>0 5 6 | £ s. d.<br>0 8 6  | £ s. d.<br>0 14 0 |                                 |

## RE-EXPORTS.

| CARGO :          |      | English Vessels.       | Irish Vessels.       | Total.                | Remarks.                                |
|------------------|------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| WINE             | Tons | 11                     | —                    | 11                    | £3 a ton.<br>About £1 6s. 0d.<br>a ton. |
| Rosin            | "    | 1½                     | —                    | 1½                    |   |
| Alum             | Lbs. | 225                    | 375                  | 600                   | 5/- to 10/- a 100<br>lbs.               |
| Brittany Linen—  |      |                        |                      |                       |   |
| Yards            |      | 350                    | 85                   | 435                   | About £1 a 100<br>yards.                |
| Brittany Canvas— |      |                        |                      |                       |   |
| Bolts            |      | 6                      | —                    | 6                     | 6/8 a bolt.                             |
| Values           |      | £ s. d.<br>41 1 3      | £ s. d.<br>2 13 4    | £ s. d.<br>43 14 7    |   |
| Grand Total—     |      |                        |                      |                       |   |
| Values           |      | £ s. d.<br>1716 12 10½ | £ s. d.<br>1776 18 3 | £ s. d.<br>3493 11 1½ |   |

## 216 ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN 16TH CENTURY

## BRISTOL, 1504-1505—(Continued)

## IRISH IMPORTS

|  | English<br>Vessels.  | Irish<br>Vessels.   | Total.              | Remarks.   |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| No. of Vessels                           | 44                   | 35                  | 79                  | Waterford 12,<br>Kinsale 7, Cork 5,<br>Ross 5, Wexford<br>3, Youghal 2,<br>Misc. (Dingle) 1. |
| CARGO:                                   |                      |                     |                     |  |
| GRAIN.                                   |                      |                     |                     |  |
| Malt Weys                                | 15                   | $\frac{1}{4}$       | 15 $\frac{1}{4}$    | 13/4 a wey.  |
| Malt, Barley and<br>Beans Mixed—<br>Weys | 22                   | 59 $\frac{1}{2}$    | 81 $\frac{1}{2}$    | 13/4 to £1 a wey.  |
| Beans Weys                               | 51                   | 45 $\frac{3}{4}$    | 96 $\frac{3}{4}$    | 13/4 a wey.  |
| Peas and Beans—<br>Weys                  | 35                   | $\frac{1}{4}$       | 35 $\frac{1}{4}$    | 13/4 a wey.  |
| Values                                   | £ s. d.<br>82 0 0    | £ s. d.<br>75 16 8  | £ s. d.<br>157 16 8 |  |
| CLOTH.                                   |                      |                     |                     | Values unknown.  |
| Panni sine grano—                        |                      |                     |                     |  |
| Panni                                    | 316                  | 33                  | 349                 | Custom 1/2 each.   |
| Dozen                                    | 59                   | 23                  | 82                  | „ 7d. 2 doz.   |
| Yards                                    | 6                    | 5                   | 11                  | „ $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a yard.   |
| Panni streit sine<br>grano Doz.          | 3                    | 3                   | 6                   | „ 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a doz.  |
| Kersie sine grano,<br>and streit No.     | —                    | 9 $\frac{1}{2}$     | 9 $\frac{1}{2}$     | „ 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. and<br>3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each.   |
| Silk Lbs.                                | 159                  | 84                  | 243                 | 13/4 a lb.   |
| Dyed Cloth „                             | 2,185                | 3,918               | 6,103               | 4d. to 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a lb.  |
| Panni Walliae<br>Streit Doz.             | 15                   | $\frac{1}{2}$       | 15 $\frac{1}{2}$    | 4/2 a doz.   |
| Fustian "Partes"                         | —                    | 1                   | 1                   | Value 5/-.   |
| Value                                    | £ s. d.<br>145 10 10 | £ s. d.<br>128 15 1 | £ s. d.<br>274 5 11 |  |
| LIQUOR.                                  |                      |                     |                     |  |
| Corrupt Wine Tuns                        | 61 $\frac{1}{4}$     | 6 $\frac{1}{4}$     | 68                  | £1 10s. od. a tun.   |
| Wine Pipes                               | —                    | 1                   | 1                   | £1 5s. od. a pipe.   |
| Beer Lasts                               | 7 $\frac{3}{4}$      | 9 $\frac{1}{4}$     | 16 $\frac{1}{2}$    | £1 10s. od. to £3<br>a last.   |
| Ale „                                    | 1                    | —                   | 1                   | £1 10s. od. a last.  |
| Value                                    | £ s. d.<br>105 12 6  | £ s. d.<br>30 11 3  | £ s. d.<br>136 3 6  |  |



## BRISTOL, 1504-1505—(Continued)

## IRISH IMPORTS—(Continued)

| CARGO :              |       | English<br>Vessels. | Irish<br>Vessels.  | Total.              | Remarks.                                  |
|----------------------|-------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| SALT                 | Tons  | 34½                 | —                  | 34½                 | 16/8 a ton.                               |
| Value                |       | £ s. d.<br>28 19 2  | —                  | £ s. d.<br>28 19 2  |   |
| IRON                 | Tons  | 1                   | 3½                 | 4½                  | £4 a ton.                                 |
| Value                |       | £ s. d.<br>4 0 0    | £ s. d.<br>12 10 0 | £ s. d.<br>16 10 0  |   |
| OTHER METALS.        |       |                     |                    |                     |   |
| Worked Lead—         |       |                     |                    |                     |   |
| Tons                 |       | 2                   | —                  | 2                   | £2 a ton                                  |
| Battrry              | Lbs   | 100                 | 534                | 634                 | Very irregular.<br>About £2 a 100<br>lbs. |
| Values               |       | £ s. d.<br>6 0 0    | £ s. d.<br>9 13 4  | £ s. d.<br>15 13 4  |   |
| COAL                 | Weyes | —                   | 9½                 | 9½                  | 3/4 a wey                                 |
| Values               |       | —                   | £ s. d.<br>1 11 8  | £ s. d.<br>1 11 8   |   |
| DYES                 |       |                     |                    |                     |   |
| Crocus               | Lbs.  | 320                 | 243½               | 563½                | 6/8 a lb.                                 |
| Orchell (worked)     | Lbs.  | 64                  | 326½               | 390½                | 1/8 a lb.                                 |
| Alum                 | "     | 660                 | 50                 | 710                 | 5/- a 100 lbs.                            |
| Various              | "     | —                   | 15                 | 15                  | Greynes, etc                              |
| Values               |       | £ s. d.<br>115 5 6  | £ s. d.<br>107 4 4 | £ s. d.<br>222 9 10 |   |
| DRUGS AND<br>SPICES. |       |                     |                    |                     |   |
| Aniseed              | Lbs.  | 550                 | 396                | 946                 | 10/- a 100 lbs.                           |
| Pepper               | "     | 2                   | 16                 | 18                  | 9d. and 1/- a lb                          |
| Cinnamon             | "     | —                   | 5                  | 5                   | 2/6 a lb.                                 |
| Various              | "     | —                   | 31½                | 31½                 | Ginger, Mace,<br>and Liquorice.           |
| Values               |       | £ s. d.<br>2 17 0   | £ s. d.<br>4 1 9   | £ s. d.<br>6 18 9   |   |

## 218 ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN 16TH CENTURY

## BRISTOL, 1504-1505—(Continued)

## IRISH IMPORTS—(Continued)

| CARGO :                    | English<br>Vessels.               | Irish<br>Vessels.                | Total.              | Remarks.   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>HARDWARES.</b>          |                                   |                                  |                     |  |
| Knives Gross               | 7 $\frac{1}{2}$                   | 15 $\frac{7}{8}$                 | 23                  | About 6/8 a gross<br>1/- a gross.  |
| Spoons "                   | 67                                | 194 $\frac{5}{6}$                | 261 $\frac{5}{6}$   |  |
| Values                     | £ s. d.<br>5 18 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  | £ s. d.<br>15 2 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  | £ s. d.<br>21 1 0   |  |
| <b>MERCERY<br/>WARES</b>   |                                   |                                  |                     | Thread, Stock-<br>ings, Belts,<br>Combs, Needles,<br>Thimbles,<br>Cushions.        |
| Various Values             | £ s. d.<br>0 3 2                  | £ s. d.<br>1 9 2                 | £ s. d.<br>1 12 4   |  |
| <b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>       |                                   |                                  |                     |  |
| Pillions Doz.              | 6 $\frac{1}{2}$                   | 28                               | 34 $\frac{1}{2}$    | 6/8 a doz.   |
| Tanned Calf Skins—<br>Doz. | 25                                | —                                | 25                  | 2/6 a doz.   |
| Hops Lbs.                  | —                                 | 300                              | 300                 | 5/- a 100 lbs.   |
| Various Values             | £ s. d.<br>3 2 4                  | £ s. d.<br>15 6 7                | £ s. d.<br>18 8 11  |  |
| Values                     | £ s. d.<br>10 8 2                 | £ s. d.<br>23 0 3                | £ s. d.<br>33 8 5   |  |
| <b>GRAND TOTALS</b>        |                                   |                                  |                     |  |
| Values                     | £ s. d.<br>509 17 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ | £ s. d.<br>425 2 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ | £ s. d.<br>934 19 9 | Add to grand<br>total value of<br>cloth unspecified,<br>but probably<br>about £100 |

## BRISTOL, 1504-1505 (Continued)

Summary showing the number of boats and values of cargoes carried to and from Ireland by the ships of individual Irish ports, and in English vessels respectively :

| IRISH EXPORTS.                               |                 |                   | IRISH IMPORTS.  |                   |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Ports to which vessels belong.               | No. of vessels. | Value of cargoes. | No. of vessels. | Value of cargoes. |
|  |                 | £ s. d.           |                 | £ s. d.           |
| Waterford                                    | 13              | 682 2 5½          | 12              | 201 12 4½         |
| Cork   | 6               | 347 13 1          | 5               | 68 14 0           |
| Ross   | 4               | 224 2 1           | 5               | 49 7 5            |
| Kinsale                                      | 7               | 209 11 3          | 7               | 56 8 4            |
| Wexford                                      | 3               | 107 15 6½         | 3               | 17 0 4            |
| Youghal                                      | 2               | 59 8 0            | 2               | 11 4 0            |
| Misc. (Dingle, etc.)                         | 4               | 146 5 10          | 1               | 20 15 9           |
| Total Irish boats                            | 39              | 1776 18 3         | 35              | 425 2 2½          |
| English vessels of various unspecified ports | 82              | 1716 12 10½       | 44              | 509 17 6½         |
| Grand total                                  | 121             | 3493 11 1½        | 79              | 934 19 9¹         |

¹ N.B. The sum of about £100 should be added to the total value of imports for the unspecified values of the panni sine grano.

BRIDGEWATER, 1560-1561, K.R.C.A. <sup>20</sup>/<sub>31</sub> (WHOLE YEAR)

## IRISH EXPORTS

|                   | Wexford Vessels. | Vessels of other Irish ports. | Total. | Remarks.   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|--------|--|
| Number of Vessels | 35               | 10                            | 45     | Youghal 5, Dungarvan 3, Waterford and Cork 1 each. |
| CARGO :           |                  |                               |        |  |
| FISH.             |                  |                               |        |  |
| White herrings—   |                  |                               |        |  |
| Lasts             | 18               | —                             | 18     | About £3 a last.                                   |
| Barrels¹          | 465½             | 3                             | 468½   | About 10/- a barrel.                               |
| Red herrings—     |                  |                               |        |  |
| Mease             | 40               | —                             | 40     | About 10/- a mease.                                |
| Salt Fish—        |                  |                               |        |  |
| Burden            | ½                | 54                            | 54½    | About 13/4 a burden                                |
| Clams—            |                  |                               |        |  |
| No.               | 59               | 12                            | 71     | About 5/- each.                                    |
| Porpoise—         |                  |                               |        |  |
| Kilderkin         | —                | 1                             | 1      |  |

¹ Includes a hogshead at £1 and several kilderkins, or half-barrels, at 5/- each.

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BRIDGEWATER, 1560-1561—(Continued)

IRISH EXPORTS—(Continued).

| CARGO :  | Wexford<br>Vessels. | Vessels<br>of other<br>Irish Ports. | Total.              | Remarks.         |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| FELLS, SKINS<br>AND HIDES.                     |                     |                                     |                     |                  |
| Sheep No.                                      | 178                 | 1810                                | 1988                |                  |
| Lamb "   | 300                 | 918                                 | 1218                | 16/8 a 100.      |
| Broke "  | —                   | 400                                 | 400                 |                  |
| Marten "                                       | —                   | 16                                  | 16                  | Nearly all these |
| Otter "  | —                   | 90                                  | 90                  | marten, otter,   |
| Deer "   | 2                   | 9                                   | 11                  | fox, and dog-    |
| Fox "  | —                   | 169                                 | 169                 | skins came from  |
| Dogskins "                                     | —                   | 3                                   | 3                   | Youghal.         |
| Wool Stones                                    | 55                  | —                                   | 55                  |                  |
| Flocks "                                       | 21½                 | 33                                  | 54½                 |                  |
| CLOTH.   |                     |                                     |                     |                  |
| Frieze. Yards                                  | 43                  | 412                                 | 455                 |                  |
| Check Frieze Rolls                             | —                   | 1                                   | 1                   |                  |
| Linen "  | 3                   | —                                   | 3                   |                  |
| Linen Yards                                    | —                   | 890                                 | 890                 |                  |
| Canvas "                                       | —                   | 50                                  | 50                  |                  |
| WOOD.  |                     |                                     |                     |                  |
| Boards No.                                     | 450                 | —                                   | 450                 | 10/- a 100.      |
| RE-EXPORTS.                                    |                     |                                     |                     |                  |
| French Salt. Weys                              | 1½                  | 12                                  | 13½                 | £1 a wey.        |
| Corrupt Wine—                                  |                     |                                     |                     |                  |
| Hogsheads                                      | —                   | 2                                   | 2                   |                  |
| Total Value of Ex-<br>ports and Re-<br>exports | £ s. d.<br>366 19 2 | £ s. d.<br>115 18 10                | £ s. d.<br>482 18 0 |                  |

## IRISH IMPORTS

|                          |     |    |     |   |
|--------------------------|-----|----|-----|---|
| Number of Vessels        | 36  | 22 | 58  | Dungarvan 8.<br>Youghal 3<br>Ross 4<br>Waterford 3<br>Misc. 4 |
| CARGO :                  |     |    |     |   |
| GRAIN.                   |     |    |     |   |
| Malt Weys                | 12  | 7  | 19  | £3 a wey includes<br>lbs.                                     |
| Malt and Barley—<br>Weys | —   | 1  | 1   | £2 a wey  |
| Beans Weys               | 130 | 82 | 212 | £1 6s. 8d. a wey  |
| Meal Barrels             | 8   | —  | 8   | 8/4 a barrel  |
| Hops Stones              | 252 | —  | 252 |   |



## BRIDGEWATER, 1560-1561—(Continued)

## IRISH IMPORTS—(Continued)

| CARGO :           | Wexford<br>Vessels.          | Vessels<br>of other<br>Irish Ports. | Total.                       | Remarks.   |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| CLOTH.            |                              |                                     |                              |  |
| Panni sine grano— |                              |                                     |                              |  |
| Panni             | 1 $\frac{3}{4}$              | —                                   | 1 $\frac{3}{4}$              | Custom $\frac{2}{3}$ each                          |
| Kersies      Doz. | 1                            | —                                   | 1                            |  |
| IRON.             |                              |                                     |                              |  |
| Wts.              | 100                          | —                                   | 100                          | 8/4 a hundred wt.                                  |
| OTHER METALS.     |                              |                                     |                              |  |
| Battry      Lbs.  | 815                          | —                                   | 815                          | 4d. a lb.  |
| Pewter      "     | 12                           | —                                   | 12                           |  |
| Crock and         |                              |                                     |                              |  |
| Pot Brass "       | 335                          | —                                   | 335                          |  |
| VARIOUS.          |                              |                                     |                              |  |
| Pitch      Wts.   | 100                          | —                                   | 100                          |  |
| Hemp      "       | 60                           | —                                   | 60                           | 5/- a wt.  |
| Ropes      "      | 1925                         | —                                   | 1925                         | 16/8 a hundred wt.                                 |
| Crocus      Lbs.  | 2                            | —                                   | 2                            |  |
| Aniseed      "    | 12                           | —                                   | 12                           |  |
| Cuttis      Gross | 3 $\frac{1}{2}$              | —                                   | 3 $\frac{1}{2}$              |  |
| Total Value       | £    s.    d.<br>234   0   8 | £    s.    d.<br>125   6   4        | £    s.    d.<br>359   7   0 | Excluding small unknown value of panni sine grano. |

NOTES.—Total number of boats trading at Bridgewater during the year was 163, of which Irish-owned shipping accounted for 103. Unfortunately, owing to bad compilation of document, destination of English boats is not mentioned, and therefore it is impossible to deduce the Anglo-Irish trade in English boats, but undoubtedly there must have been some. Nevertheless, it is interesting to contrast the flourishing trade in Irish vessels, as shown in this Account, with that for 1588-89 (K.R.C.A. 31) when only one boat (French) entered the port during the first quarter, and the Customer remarks : "For this quarter nother Inwardes nother outwardes any thinge. God send bottes." Whole total of shipping

## 222 ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN 16TH CENTURY

for that year consisted of 16 vessels, of which six (?) were Irish, and the whole custom and subsidy only £53 9s. 2d. as compared with £204 6s. 0d. in 1560. Thus the falling off of the southern Irish trade seems, in addition to other causes, to have re-acted adversely on Bridgewater.

## CHESTER AND LIVERPOOL, 1588-1589

(K.R.C.A. 31/32-35, WHOLE YEAR)

## IRISH EXPORTS

| CARGO.                           | English Vessels. | Irish Vessels. | Total. | Remarks.   |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------|--|
| YARN. Packs                      | 934½             | 205½           | 1139½  | Includes hundred weights at rate of 400 to the pack.<br>Average value varies considerably £10 to £20 a pack, but sometimes lower for wet yarn. Total Value amounts to about £16,932 10s. 0d. |
| Quarters                         | 469½             | 191            | 660½   |  |
| Fardells                         | 16               | —              | 16     |  |
| FELLS AND SKINS.                 |                  |                |        |  |
| Sheep No.                        | 30,836           | 3,840          | 34,676 | Irregular. 16/8 to £1 per 100.   |
| Broke "                          | 38,832           | 13,335         | 52,167 | Irregular. 5/- to 10/- a 100.  |
| Lamb "                           | 16,700           | 2,400          | 19,100 | About 10/- a 100.  |
| Winter Skins and loose fells No. | 4,650            | —              | 4,650  | About 7/6 a 100.   |
| Kid "                            | 4,150            | 1,650          | 5,800  | About 10/6 a 100   |
| Calf "                           | 5,940            | 1,860          | 7,800  | About 1½d. each.   |
| Deer "                           | 391              | 15             | 406    | Includes stag skins, about 1/6 to 2/- each.  |
| Marten "                         | —                | 24             | 24     |  |
| Coney "                          | —                | 3,100          | 3,100  |  |
| Salt Hides "                     | 175              | —              | 175    | 2/- each.  |
| Misc. "                          | —                | 24             | 24     | " Spruce and leather skins."   |
| TALLOW.                          |                  |                |        |  |
| Rendered Wts.                    | 4,064            | 250            | 4,314  | 16/8 to £1 a hundred weight.   |
| Rough "                          | 10,878           | 1,400          | 12,278 | 8/- to 16/8 a hundred weight.  |

## CHESTER AND LIVERPOOL, 1588-1589—(Continued)

## IRISH EXPORTS—(Continued)

| CARGO :                                |          | English<br>Vessels. | Irish<br>Vessels. | Total. | Remarks.  |
|--|----------|---------------------|-------------------|--------|---|
| CLOTH.                                 |          |                     |                   |        |   |
| Linen                                  | Yards    | 4,100               | 300               | 4,400  | £1 to £2 a 100 yds.   |
| Frieze Rug                             | "        | 108                 | —                 | 108    | About 6d. a yard, black and white.                                    |
| Mats                                   | "        | 80                  | —                 | 80     |   |
| White blanket rug                      | "        | 12                  | —                 | 12     | 6d. a yard.   |
| Cadows and Blankets                    | No.      | 42                  | 60                | 102    | Various prices. About 5/- each white, and 8/- to 12/- each, coloured. |
| Mantles                                | No.      | 2                   | 8                 | 10     | Small grey 3/4, Russell 5/-, one white 15/-.                          |
| Frieze gowns, ready made               | "        | —                   | 6                 | 6      | 3/4 each.   |
| Misc.                                  | Pieces   | 24                  | 2                 | 26     | Welsh frieze, chekkars and calico.                                    |
| GRAIN.                                 |          |                     |                   |        |   |
| WHEAT                                  | Hogshds. | —                   | 2                 | 2      |   |
|  | Barrels  | 396½                | 408½ <sup>1</sup> | 805    | About 10/- a barrel. <sup>2</sup>                                     |
| Mast Corn                              | "        | 49                  | —                 | 49     | About 9/- a barrel  |
| RYE.                                   | Hhd.     | 5                   | 2                 | 7      |   |
|  | Bls.     | 72                  | 438½              | 510½   | About 2/6 a barrel.   |
| Barley                                 | "        | 183                 | 60                | 243    |   |
| Peas                                   | Hhd.     | 6½                  | 5                 | 11½    |   |
| Peas                                   | Bls.     | 15                  | 30                | 45     |   |
| Peas and Beans                         | "        | 4                   | —                 | 4      |   |
| Mixed. Wheat and Peas or vetch or rye, | "        | 51½                 | —                 | 51½    | 5/- to 7/6 a barrel.  |
| BEEF.                                  | Hhd.     | 13½                 | 2                 | 15½    | About £1 a hhd.   |
| LIVE ANIMALS.                          |          |                     |                   |        |   |
| Kine                                   | No.      | 76                  | —                 | 76     | About £1 each.  |
| Beeves                                 | "        | 15                  | —                 | 15     | About £1 each.  |
| AQUAVITE                               | Hhd.     | 1                   | —                 | 1      |   |
|  | Bls.     | 2½                  | 4½                | 7      |   |

<sup>1</sup> Includes the consignment of 200 barrels of wheat in bulk from Dunganvaran (£66-13-4) by license of the Lord Chancellor of England.

<sup>2</sup> Barrels include Bushels. N.B.—Measures only approximated as the Chester and London and Irish weights varied.

224 ANGLO-IRISH TRADE IN 16TH CENTURY  
CHESTER AND LIVERPOOL, 1588-1589—(Continued)

IRISH EXPORTS—(Continued)

| CARGO :                         | English<br>Vessels.  | Irish<br>Vessels.      | Total.                  | Remarks.                     |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| FISH.                           |  |                        |                         |                              |
| Salmon Hhd.                     | 9  | 3                      | 12                      | About £3 each.               |
| Herrings, full „                | 45   | 29                     | 74                      | About 5/- each.              |
| „ Shotten „                     | 85   | 34                     | 119                     |                              |
| „ Red Cades                     |  | 6                      | 6                       |                              |
| Codfish No.                     | 500  | 1,660                  | 2,160                   | “wette” and<br>“drye.”       |
| Whittings „                     |  | 100                    | 100                     |                              |
| Haddock Els.                    | 1  |                        | 1                       |                              |
| OLD PEWTER<br>and BRASS Lbs.    | 452  | 60 and 150<br>“crokes” | 512 and 150<br>“crokes” |                              |
| MISCELLANEOUS<br>RE-EXPORTS.    |  |                        |                         |                              |
| IRON Tons                       | 19   | 11                     | 30                      | Mainly Spanish.<br>£4 a ton. |
| Vinegar Hhd.                    | 3  | 2                      | 5                       |                              |
| Spices. Lbs.                    | 22   | 107½                   | 129½                    | Ginger, cinna-<br>mon, etc.  |
| Marmalade<br>and Suc-<br>cade „ | 30   | 4                      | 34                      |                              |
| Various                         | Unspecified quantities and values of pitch, tar, alum,<br>oil, thread and playing cards. |                        |                         |                              |

NOTES.—(1) Other shipping at Chester and Liverpool consisted of 15 vessels from Scotland, France and the Isle of Man with goods to value of £479 8s. 4d.

(2) Irish merchants enjoyed liberal privileges at Chester and Liverpool. Thus according to K.R.C.A. <sup>31</sup>/<sub>32</sub> the total subsidy due at Liverpool was £279 14s. 3d., of which Irish goods accounted for £278 17s. 7d., but the allowances on that sum amounted to £231 13s. 9d., so that the actual or “nett” customs paid was only £47 3s. 10d.

(3) George Beverley, factor for Sir F. Walsingham, is entered for several consignments of “grene” madder free of custom.

(4) “Elizabeth Quyn of Dublin, widowe and free

citizen," trades extensively through her factor and "sonne" Richard Quyn.

(5) Entries for provisions free of custom, both for house and bark, include wheat, beef, aquavite, and "one Irish cowe."

### CHESTER AND LIVERPOOL, 1588-1589—(Continued)

Summary of Irish Exports showing number of vessels and value of cargoes shipped to Chester and Liverpool from various Irish ports :

| Irish Port<br>of<br>Consignment. | English Vessels. |                      |       | Irish Vessels. |                      |       | Total. |                      |                   |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------|----------------|----------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|-------------------|
|                                  | No.              | Value of<br>Cargoes. |       | No.            | Value of<br>Cargoes. |       | No.    | Value of<br>Cargoes. |                   |
|                                  |                  | £                    | s. d. |                | £                    | s. d. |        | £                    | s. d.             |
| Drogheda ..                      | 38               | 8,698                | 15 0  | 4              | 1,059                | 0 0   | 42     | 9,757                | 15 0              |
| Dublin ..                        | 62               | 5,368                | 1 4   | 18             | 2,240                | 5 10  | 80     | 7,608                | 7 2 <sup>1</sup>  |
| Carlingford and<br>Dundalk ..    | 10               | 2,848                | 16 8  | 2              | 410                  | 3 4   | 12     | 3,259                | 0 0               |
| Waterford                        | 11               | 134                  | 11 8  | 2              | 72                   | 5 0   | 13     | 206                  | 16 8              |
| Wexford and Ross                 | 1                | 20                   | 0 0   | 5              | 61                   | 6 8   | 6      | 81                   | 6 8               |
| Dungarvan                        | —                |                      |       | 1              | 66                   | 13 4  | 1      | 66                   | 13 4 <sup>2</sup> |
| Ardglass and<br>Knockfergus      | 1                | 23                   | 0 0   | 1              | 15                   | 0 0   | 2      | 38                   | 0 0               |
| Total ..                         | 123              | 17,093               | 4 8   | 33             | 3,924                | 14 2  | 156    | 21,017               | 18 10             |

<sup>1</sup> Value of part of one boatload approximated owing to lack of data.

<sup>2</sup> Corn only.

### CHESTER AND LIVERPOOL, 1588-1589—(Continued)

#### IRISH IMPORTS

| CARGO :      |         | English Vessels. | Irish Vessels. | Total.      | Remarks.   |
|--------------|---------|------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| COAL.        | Tons    | 558              | 36             | 594         | 3/4 a ton. |
| SMALL WARES. |         |                  |                |             |            |
| Values       | £ s. d. | 7,978 5 4        | 3,496 16 6     | 11,475 1 10 |            |
| Total Values | £ s. d. | 8,071 5 4        | 3,502 16 6     | 11,574 1 10 |            |



NOTES.—(1) Owing to the great diversity of the goods mentioned, and the lack of separate values, it has been impossible to give them in detail. Attention may, however, be drawn to the large quantities of hops recorded in the original of this account. The rest consist mainly of the wares referred to in the text. It is interesting to note that several Galway merchants are named who traded, via Dublin, in luxuries, and one, Robert Kerwin, was allowed a yard of velvet for his provision.

(2) There are many entries for provisions of ships, including corn, beef, hops, and "one dossen pewter plate," etc.

(3) One shipment also includes velvet hose, "a doublet of satten," etc., entered as a councillor's necessities and free of custom.

(4) Other shipping for the year, Scotland, Isle of Man, and France amounts in value to £705 19s. 0d.

#### CHESTER AND LIVERPOOL, 1588-1589—(*Continued*)

Summary of Irish Imports showing number of vessels and value of cargoes shipped *from* Chester and Liverpool *to* various Irish ports :

| Irish Port of Destination.    | English Vessels. |                   | Irish Vessels. |                   | Total. |                   |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|
|                               | No.              | Value of Cargoes. | No.            | Value of Cargoes. | No.    | Value of Cargoes. |
|                               |                  | £ s. d.           |                | £ s. d.           |        | £ s. d.           |
| Dublin .. ..                  | 111              | 5,976 16 0        | 19             | 3,404 19 10       | 130    | 9,381 15 10       |
| Drogheda .. ..                | 46               | 1,559 12 10       | 2              | 33 13 4           | 48     | 1,593 6 2         |
| Carlingford and Dundalk .. .. | 12               | 532 19 10         |                |                   | 12     | 532 19 10         |
| Waterford .. ..               | 1                | 2 6 8             | 2              | 36 10 0           | 3      | 38 16 8           |
| Wexford .. ..                 |                  |                   | 4              | 27 13 4           | 4      | 27 13 4           |
| Totals                        | ..170            | 8,071 15 4        | 27             | 3,502 16 6        | 197    | 11,574 11 10      |

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## INTRODUCTION

THE subject matter of the foregoing chapters is largely based on material gathered from the English Custom's Accounts and Port Books. These are really registers of each ship's bill of lading kept by the Custom's officials of the various ports, in order to account for the customs and subsidy due to the Government. Thus they afford some of the most definite and detailed information extant on the exports and imports. Unfortunately, they have many limitations, not the least being their bad state of preservation. As a series they are unsatisfactory, since many years are missing, and it is hard to get either an Account or a Port Book which contains entries for a complete year, or indeed, for a complete half year. This is especially true of the late Bristol books. Moreover, there are several varieties of Accounts within the series, some of which are practically useless, owing to their mode of compilation, for instance, the Controllments and many of the Ledgers. The best kind are the Particulars of Account, and even these may lack vital details, some giving only the names of the boats, without any information as to the origin and destination of the cargo. The Port Books begin in 1565. They were recommended for destruction in 1896, but were saved by the intervention of Dr. Hall and the Record Commission in 1912. They are of use, but on the whole are far less valuable than the Custom's Accounts, since in the former the human element is seldom lacking and the Custom's officials appear to have resented the double set of entries, and to have been inclined to fill them up carelessly. They were sent out from headquarters, ready bound, and with a note on the outer folio, stating the name of the port for which they were to be used, and the number of "Blanck" leaves within, but many were returned in the same "Blanck" condition. As throughout the century there were constant complaints about the impossibility of checking the actual receipts of the customs owing to the badly kept returns, it is not surprising to find that so many of the records are somewhat poor. Bearing these difficulties in mind, however, it will be seen that the Custom's Accounts do contain much information unobtainable elsewhere.

## LIST OF AUTHORITIES WITH ABBREVIATIONS.

1. *Manuscript Sources* (unpublished)

K.R.C.A. = Custom's Accounts. K.R.P.B. = Port Books.  
 S.P. = State Papers. (Public Record Office, London).  
 Repertory to Decrees, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth. (Salved from the Four Courts, now in the Record Room of Dublin Castle).  
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2. *Printed Sources.* (a) *Collections of State Papers, Official Documents, etc.*

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## GLOSSARY

- bays : baize.  
bolt : wood in special sizes for cleaving into laths.  
boltes : a roll of woven fabric consisting of various lengths ;  
28 ells of canvas.  
bombardes : large leathern vessels to carry liquors.  
bombasse : cotton wadding, silk and worsted dress material.  
bonnaught : tax for maintenance of soldiers, also billeted  
soldiers.  
brasers, brazier : a large flat pan or tray for holding burning  
charcoal, etc., or one who works in brass.  
broke-fells : inferior sheep skins.  
buffin : coarse cloth much used for gowns of the middle class in  
the time of Elizabeth.  
burden, burthen, byrdun, etc. : a load (whether of man, animal,  
vehicle, etc.) considered as a measure of capacity,  
especially applied to the carrying capacity of a ship.
- cadows, caddow, etc. : rough woollen coverings or coverlets,  
cf. cadurci in Juvenal VII, 221.  
caliver, calives : a light hand gun or musket introduced in the  
sixteenth century.  
carvel : a light fast ship, chiefly Spanish or Portuguese.  
check : a fabric woven or printed with small squares.  
cirogrillus : a small gregarious quadruped of Palestine—coney  
of the Bible, porcupine of Du Cange.  
clam : some bivalvular shell-fish.  
clout : a piece of cloth containing a certain number of pins or  
needles.  
cocket, cokket, cocquet, etc. : a seal belonging to the King's  
Custom House ; the document certifying payment of  
the custom's duty.  
cullen, Cologne, colen, collin, etc. : things obtained from the  
city or district.  
dicker—dyker, dikar, dickar, diccar, etc. : 10 hides or skins, and  
hence a package or lot of ten hides.  
dornix or Dornick, name derived from Dornick, the Flemish for  
Tournay in Flanders : partly woollen fabric used for  
hangings, vestments, etc.

draugh timber : a measure of sawyer's work ?  
drover : a small boat.

fardells : bundles.  
feltes : felt hats.  
flox or flocke, flokke, etc. : inferior wool.

program : a coarse fabric of silk, mohair and wool, or of these mixed with silk. Fr. gros grain.

hobby : a small or middle-sized horse : an ambling or pacing horse, in early times chiefly referred to as Irish.  
hearse buttons : probably the fittings for the hearse cloth or funeral pall.

jack : the male bird of the merlion, a very small kind of falcon.

laton, latten : mixed metal of the colour of brass.  
eshe, leach ? : a dish of meat, eggs, spices, etc. drie leche : a sort of cake, *or* thong for holding hounds and coursing hounds.

mark : 13s. 4d. in England.  
mast : fruit of oak and beech.  
merlion : a very small falcon, male bird called jack-merlin.  
meslone : inferior corn.  
morkins : sheep and lamb killed by accident or disease.  
multon : mutton.  
muskets (hawk)—musquet : male of the sparrow-hawk.

packet, paquet : mail boat, originally the boat kept for carrying "the packet" of state letters and dispatches.

panni, panys, etc. : roll of cloth.

pewke, puke (not connected with puce) : a superior kind of woollen cloth for gowns. The colour is not definitely known, perhaps was originally the ordinary colour of the cloth. Was then made from galls and copperas and so must have been bluish black.

pipe : a large cask of more or less definite capacity used for wine and also for other things, as eggs, meat, fish, etc. Sometimes as a measure of capacity =  $\frac{1}{2}$  tun or 2 hogsheads or 4 barrels, i.e. about 120 gallons. Perhaps : a butt.

pipe staves : staves used for making pipes or casks.

pragges, pragys : a pin, nail or spike.

pykcard, picard, etc. : a large sailing boat formerly used for coast or river traffic.

sculles : iron headpieces.

seasoned (of leather) : matured, fit for use.

setter's thread, syter's thread : thread used by workers called setters in manufacturing cloth.

shotten : fish that has spawned.

slade stone : the sole of a plough.

spar-hawk : sparrow hawk.

spruce : Prussian leather which was regarded as specially fine and elegant ; also in sense of brought or obtained from Prussia. Sometimes for spruce fir.

stage (of leather) : dried.

stockardes : stockings.

stourying : valiant, strong, fighting.

succade, sukcade, etc. : fruits in sugar, either candied or in syrup.

tawed : dressed leather, also to make skins into leather by steeping them, after suitable preparation, in a solution of alum and salt, the product is white and pliant, i.e. white leather.

testoon : English rs. of Henry VII, later only worth 6*d.* (Portuguese—2½*d.*).

tykes, ticks : case or cover of hard linen or cotton for mattress or pillow.

usker, " couched ne layde with usker " : ornamented, or jewelled.

vini corrupti : inferior wines.

weles, weel, wyeles, etc. : a wicker trap for catching fish, especially eels, or a basket, especially one in which fish are kept.

wey : a standard of dry goods weight, varying greatly with different commodities.

Of Cheese .. .. 224 lbs.

Wool .. .. 162 lbs.

Salt .. .. 160 stone, also 10 barrels.

Corn, coal, etc. .. 6 qrs.





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